Satisar *to* Kashmir



~

an ETHNOLOGICAL, CULTURAL *and* HISTORICAL *study of* ANCIENT KASHMIR

~

Pushkar Nath Nehru

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Dedicated

To

The memory of my father,
Pandit Beshember Nath Nehru,
who was my guide, teacher and idol.

- Pushkar Nath Nehru

~ Contents ~

About the Author		vii
Epigraph		ix
Preface		xv
Foreword		xix
Chapter 1	The Great Lake	1
Chapter 2	Heaven on Earth	7
Chapter 3	Early Human Settlements	13
Chapter 4	The Melting Pot	81
Chapter 5	Kashmiri Pandit or Bhatta	97
Chapter 6	The Ancient Treasury	115

Appendices *181*

Appendix - 1 *182*

Appendix - 2 *219*

Appendix - 3 *237*

Appendix - 4 *244*

Appendix - 5 *293*

Glossary **295**

Bibliography **313**

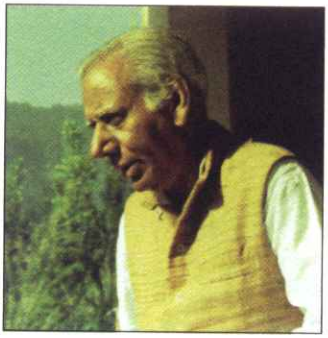
About the Author

Pushkar Nath Nehru was born on 13th June 1926 in Srinagar, in Kashmir. He started as an Apprentice Engineer in Radio Kashmir in 1949 and retired as Superintending Engineer, Doordarshan, Srinagar, in June, 1984. Even though by occupation a Broadcasting Engineer, he remained fascinated with the spiritual splendors and the varied accomplishments of the antecedent people of Kashmir. He, apart from being a very able engineer, was widely educated in the realm of science, philosophy, religion and history. During his stint as the Head of J&K Community Viewing and Listening Department of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting from 1980 to 1983, he travelled extensively in the valley of Kashmir (Valley). His impressions of the historical sities motivated him to embark on this study.

After the Valley got engulfed in turmoil in the year 1990, he left Kashmir and came to reside in the city of Pune whereupon, he concretized his interest by seriously researching into the ethnic, cultural and historical antecedents of ancient Kashmir with particular emphasis on the roots of the displaced community of *Kashmiri Pandits*. With this intent, he, among other things, became a life member of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Pune) and the Asiatic Society (Mumbai). On 24th July, 2003, during his visit to Srinagar, he suddenly passed away at his residence at Shankar Bhawan, Gagribal, at the very place that had been his home. This, in a way, signified his deep spiritual connection with the valley of his dreams. It was felt that his work on Kashmir merited to be shared among those who would, hopefully, find it gratifying in many ways. We hope this study will do justice to the hard-work put in by him and to his vision of a Kashmir which can still become the "paradise that it once promised to be".



Portrait of the Author by Bashir Shora (water color)



Pushkar Nath Nehru

Epigraph

Though, not saying, he said, "passed, beyond impasse",
saying, he said, "Pushkar Nath pass"

Dear father
with a darker face,
like that of Krishna,
you were fairer than the fresh snows of the Harmukh.

With eyes lowered and shy of saying,
you dwelt on reflections
shimmering over waters
flowing under the shadows of the Seven Bridges
in the valley of lakes.

You spoke with insistent reverence
of the ancestors and the ancient age
among those who cared
and those who didn't.

Just as you fell down from your mother's lap
grief held you firmly in its arms,
it stared you hard in the face,
it didn't allow you
even to cry.

Those that could hold your hands
were blown away by early winds
or entrapped in their own errands.
Your pilloried youth
found you a stranger among kins,
inequities blew into your face
like fierce winds.
That is how you learnt to speak
in the midst of your turbulent sleep.

Yet, you held on to the sails like a calm old sailor
drawing from the fountain of peace
from a distant horizon.

Kaluram, the monkey in a hat, suit and a cane;
Those stories you made up for me
gave me more joy than all the toys of my childhood.

You made us wonder at stars and far beyond.
Of the Sciences,
you spoke of as a story.
Of the explorations and exploits,
of who we are, wherefrom and whereto,
of those who came and all they did,
you shared amongst us
and even your grandchildren.

While others were immersed in proud calculations
of the marks that their children had fetched,
you allowed us to debunk, flay and dismiss
your most adored convictions
and walk with you, mile after mile
in joyous babble;
the rubble of our adolescence.

You always gave and never took.
You could give your last penny
without a blink.
You would stand as humble as grass
you never treated yourself as one above
you would talk to the servant or lord,
alike, in the same vein.

The dark shadows of your early years;
you dispelled with the ease of a child.
The worst was dismissed with a smile of no-utterance.
Not one bitter word for anyone,
you rubbed your hurts
with the balm of your own silent pains
on ancient but hidden wounds-
The child who, for the salvation of his departed sibling
was asked to wail and cry as if into a dark well
by heartless advisors
was none but you.

In this dismal shell of your past
the pearl was cast.
Your words became our sunshine,
your vision, a clear blue sky.

Your table-talk ascended far away
from trivialities
into the celestial realm
of a distant world.

I asked you once
where you would rather be
the next time,
in the next sojourn.

Where-else, but in some forlorn village of Kashmir,
you said.

No wonder Saint Nandlal,
though, not saying, he said,
passed, beyond impasse,
but saying, he said,
Pushkar Nath pass.

Dear father
you can't ever be
not there for me,
even the next time,
in the next sojourn
of you
or of me.

Ranjan Nehru



"Across the Porch of Shalimar", by Ranjan Nehru (water-colour on paper).

Preface

The natives of Kashmir (here we mean the geographical region of the valley of Kashmir) comprise, among others, the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. The Muslims and the Hindus of the Valley, speaking *Kashmiri* as a common language, though with some dialectical differences, are known as *Kashmiris*. Most of the Hindus of the Valley, before their exodus in the year 1990, were Brahmins, whom people in general call *Pandits* and who, among the Kashmiris, are referred to as *Bhattas*.

The purpose of this treatise is to mainly rediscover the ethnological, cultural and religious antecedents of these people from the early times. This study, in a way, implies that, in addition to Kashmiri Pandits, the ancestors of a sizeable number of present day Kashmiri Muslims, before the advent of Islam in the Valley, could trace their origin to the Naga and Aryan syncretic culture. Without claiming any scholastic authority on the subject, this book attempts to trace the roots of the common ancestry of Kashmiris and to dwell upon their ethnological, cultural, social, religious and historical emergence from the ancient to the medieval times.

The main sources of this work come from the Nilmata Purana, *Rajtarangini* of Kalhana, traditional literature and the exhaustive national and international references on the socio-cultural history of Kashmir. Further, the treatise, being limited by paucity of sources, has not only relied on the views of scholars but has also taken the traditional, mythological and legendry sources as supportive references. The contents under the heading "Theology and Origin of Nagas" (in context to Serpents of Wisdom), appearing in Chapter 3

(Early Human Settlements) and excerpts from a paper titled "Era aberrations by Kalhana in Rajtarangini" has been subsequently inserted by us with a view of providing an additional perspective.

The author of this treatise, Late Mr. Pushkar Nath Nehru, our noble father, took 12 long years to complete this work with single handed perseverance. His chief aide was his wife and our mother, Mrs. Shanta Nehru, who avidly supported him in the efforts put in by him to undertake this work.

Our father passed away in 2003. The publication of this book has been delayed for more than nine years after his demise, primarily because we, due to our limited understanding of the subject, had to struggle with the manuscript, the sources and the required references. Hence, we regret that in many places we are unable to provide specific references with page or verse numbers in the cited excerpts. We also acknowledge with gratitude the help and suggestions given by Ms. Adhya Saxena, Head of Department, History, M.S. University, Vadodara, in the process of editing of this book. We are also greatful to Mr.Milind Nitsure for the assistance provided by him in the data entry and compilation of this study.

Nonetheless, we hope that this work, while providing a cultural and a historical perspective of an ancient era of Kashmir, would also possibly provide some inspiration to all such young Kashmiri Pandits who, after their unfortunate displacement from Kashmir in 1990, are at cross roads and in search of their cultural identity and ethnicity. Further, this work is also intended to unabashedly introduce the pre-Islamic era and the Kashmiri Bhatta among those Kashmiri Muslims who, after the exit of the Bhattas from the Valley in 1989-90, do indeed miss their presence or would want their off-springs to know about them and the unique antecedent cultural milieu from which all Kashmiris emerged and flourished, and of which the Kashmiri

Muslims are equal inheritors. It can also provide further impetus to future ethnological, cultural, social or historical studies for enabling better understanding of the present day Kashmiri society, keeping in view the rich achievements of the antecedent people of this beleaguered Valley.

Ranjan Nehru & Sunanda Nehru Ganju,
January, 2012.

Foreword

India does not have a strong tradition of historiography, particularly for the ancient period. In the entire range of our ancient literature there are only two works, Bana's *Harsha-charita* (6th century), and Kalhana's Rajtarangini (12th century), which can be classed as historical writings. Of these, the former deals mostly with Harsha's life before he ascended the throne, and is not of much use to write history of his reign. Kalhana's Rajtarangini, however, can truly be said to be a work of historiography as it has been based on historical documents available in the palace archives of Kashmir. But we have a tremendous wealth of traditional history which has a hoary antiquity. The voluminous Puranic literature, known as *Itihasa-Purana*, contains in the *Vamsh-anu-charita* section long lists of different dynasties and their kings, along with their regal years. But all this was dismissed by several scholars, Indian as well as foreign, as figment of imagination and, as being based on myths and legends, these had no historical substratum in them. However, this traditional history has been very meticulously reconstructed from the Puranas by F.E.Pargiter in his *Dynasties of the Kali Age and Ancient Indian Historical Tradition.* What is more, of late, attempts are being made to search for corroborative evidence in the archaeological record and there seems to be some hope that at least a few of the Puranic myths and legends have a substance of truth in them. Quite a few scholars are inclined to accept that the Indus or the Harappan civilization was probably the creation of the Rigvedic Aryans and similarly a strong case has been made to identify the use of Painted Grey Pottery as representing the culture of the Mahabharata period for which circumstantial evidence is available.

The present work, *Satisar to Kashmir*, is an ethnological, cultural and historical study of ancient Kashmir. It is based to a considerable extent on the Nilmata Purana, which is not included in the eighteen Mahapurunas. It is indeed an achievement for the author of this work, the late Pushkar Nath Nehru who, though an engineer by profession, was passionately interested in the glorious past of Kashmir. He seems to have used all his spare time in collecting the material and committing it to writing. Some slight modifications were made to it by his son, Sri Ranjan Nehru, a corporate lawyer and an artist and poet of no mean merit. It is this spare time research by non-specialists that forms the backbone of European scholarship and should be emulated by Indians. The study is a shining example of what one can achieve with devotion and dedication.

The apt title, *Satisar to Kashmir*, needs some explanation. *Satisar* was the name of a lake that was in the Valley in geological ages. It was the lake of the goddess *Sati*. Hence, the Nilmata Purana referes to it as *Satisara*. It drained out of the Valley probably because of some tectonic activity. The prehistoric man can be said to have arrived in the Valley in the Early Stone Age as is evident from the implements that have turned up at Pahalgam, but the settled life began much later in the fourth millennium as is clear from the excavations at Gufkraal (Potter's cave).The story is carried further at Burzahom near Srinagar where the Neolithic farmers lived in pit dwellings to ward off intense cold. Their mixed economy was based on subsistence agriculture, sheep herding and hunting-fishing. The Harappans also seem to have reached the Valley for trading goods. The Valley comes into prominence from the time of Ashoka and reached its zenith under the Kushans as the place named Baramulla (Varahamula), Ushkar (Huvishkapura) and many others indicate. There is a considerable Gandhara influence on the art and architecture of Kashmir.

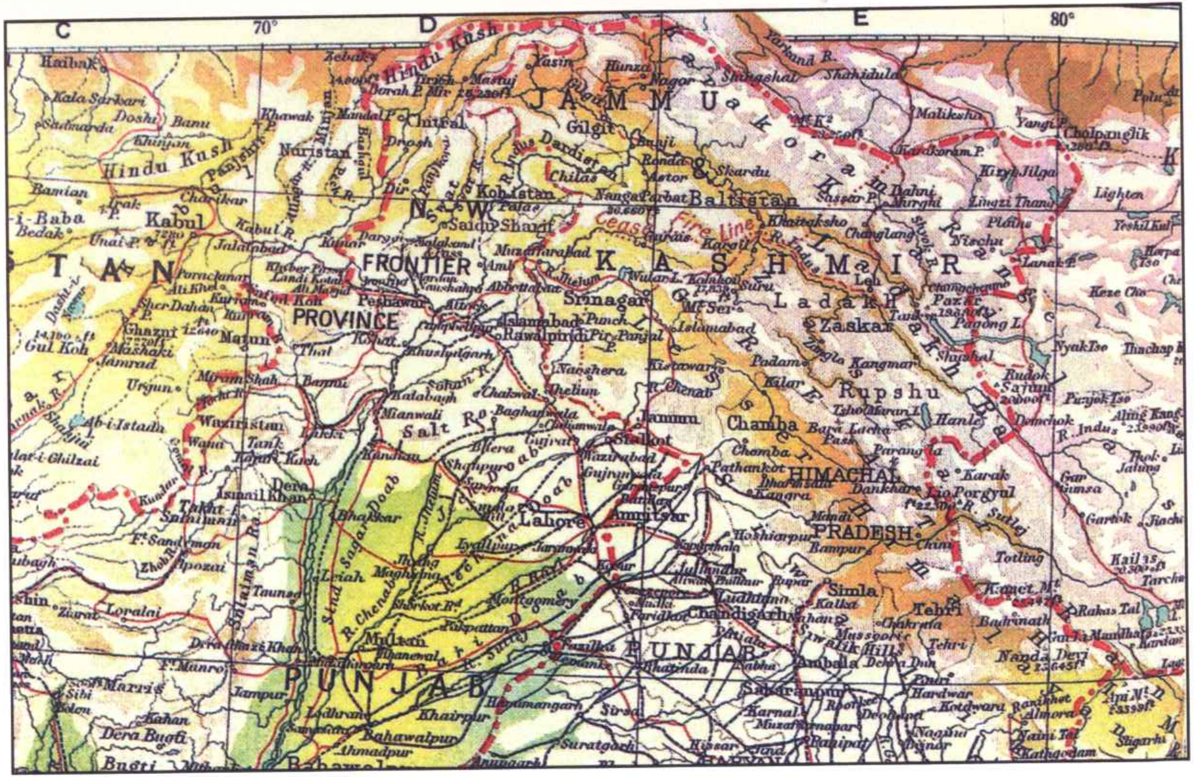
The Post-Gupta Kashmir has a checkered history which continues in an almost unbroken succession till today and when the Valley will again enjoy its balmy days is hard to predict. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book which I found is the questions that have been raised by the author. They are betoken of his immense interest in the history of Kashmir for questions will occur to one who is deeply immersed in the study. Answers to some of them are available, and I have no doubt that the author himself would have provided them had he been alive.

Kashmir has a rich past and the book will doubtless inspire further research in the subject, particularly from the standpoint of corroborating the myths and legends with the archaeological records.

21 February, 2011

Dr. M. K. Dhavalikar

Prof. Dr. Madhukar Keshav Dhavalikar served the Archaeological Survey of India as Technical Assistant from 1953 to 1965. He was a Lecturer in Ancient Indian History Culture and Archaeology at the Nagpur University from 1965 to 1967. He served the Deccan College, Pune, as Reader in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology from 1967 to 1982, and as Professor from 1982 to 1990. He held the positions of Joint-Director (1982-1985) and Director (1985-1990). He has been awarded the fellowship of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (2010) and the Ravindranath Tagore Fellowship in Cultural Research by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India (2010). He was felicitated with Padma Shri award in the field of Archeology in the year 2011.



Map of Jammu & Kashmir

~ *Chapter 1* ~

The Great Lake



Satisar, The Great Lake

Satisar, The Great Lake

What is known as Kashmir today was once a part of a land that remained submerged in the Tethys Sea for about 900 million years during the Geological Period. During the Pliocene Age, this area emerged as a vast sweet-water lake covering almost the entire valley of Kashmir. As per findings of the geologists, the age of this ancient lake was more than a million years. The depth of the alluvium had been nearly 6,000 feet and also the vast Karewa deposits abounding in the area points towards the existence of a vast lake (which nearly was 1000 feet above the present level) that filled the entire length and breadth of the Valley. Even the Shankracharya and Hari-Parbat hills of Srinagar would have remained submerged under this lake. The physiography of Kashmir therefore indicates that the Valley and the great lake that preceded was of tectonic origin. This lake was traditionally known as *Satisar* (The Lake of the Goddess Sati). While referring to *Satidesa* (Kashmir) and its formation, the Nilmat Purana, the most important source of information on ancient Kashmir says:

Naudehena Sati Devi bhumir bhavati parthiva.
Tasyam tu bhumaui bhavati saras tu vimalodakam.
Sadyojanayatam ramyam tadardhena ca vistretam.
Satidesam iti khyatam devakridas manoharam.

"With the body in the style of a boat, goddess Sati becomes the earth and a lake of clear water, known as *Satidesh*, six yojnas (about 90 kms) long and half of that in breadth (about 45 kms), comes into being, enjoyable, rapturous and the abode of sports for the gods."

The above shloka clearly indicates that the Valley was once submerged in a vast lake and the dimensions given therein are, in fact, approximately equal to what geologists indicate in terms of the length of the Karewas stretching from Baramulla to Shopian.

The Great Desiccation

But be that as it may, the Great Lake thereafter appears to have been drained out from the Valley. It is surmised that some seismic or tectonic activity, resulting in the opening and subsequent deepening of the outlet at Baramulla, caused the draining of lake (desiccation). However, no investigation appears to have been carried out which would decisively indicate as to when this event took place and how long the activity lasted.

Corroboration from Nilmat Purana

Jalodbhava, the water demon

The Nilmat Purana adds some credibility to this geological evidence by referring to a mythological being, known as the demon *Jalodbhava*, who was born in the waters of the Satisar lake and who thronged the length and breadth of its waters. He is stated to have been destroying human life all round, including at places named as *Darvabhisara* (the area between Jhelum and Chinab rivers), Gandhara (north-west of India, Taxilla, Peshawar and parts of Afghanistan) and at the settlements of the Sakas and the Khasas. Nila, son of Kashyapa, the then king of Nagas in Kashmir, urged his father to take steps for the elimination of the demon with divine help. Thereafter, Kashyapa worshipped Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and sought their help in the matter. However, due to a boon given to him by Lord Shiva, the demon could not be vanquished as long as he was in water. Hence, Ananta was first compelled to drain out the water from the lake by making an opening and breaking forth the mountain barriers, following which the demon was killed.

Chronology

The description given in the Nilmat Purana of the course of events, which ultimately resulted in the draining of the Satisar lake through the gorge at Baramulla put together with the view of the archeologists stating that Paleolithic human settlements (i.e. about 7000 B.C.) existed in the higher reaches of the Valley (at about 7000 ASL) in the north, north-west and north-east of the Valley prior to the draining-out of its waters, indicates a broad time-frame within which the desiccation would have taken place. If we examine the Neolithic and post-Neolithic remnants, such as the Burzahama Finds, which have been radio-carbon dated, it will be seen that these human settlement in the Valley would date back to 4000 to 3500 B.C. The Neolithic (the New Stone Age) settlements, however, indicate that the desiccation must have occurred anywhere between 7000 to 3500 B.C. Further, these settlements appear to have been contemporaneous to the other settlements outside the Kashmir region such as the Early Harappan and Greater Indus cultures in the north-west and west respectively, in addition to those in the Persian Gulf, Eastern Iran, Baluchistan, Afghanistan and parts of East Punjab.

The Impact of the Draining

In its mythological rendering, the *Nilmat Purana* indicates that the desiccation was a major and sudden geo-tectonic event. It says:

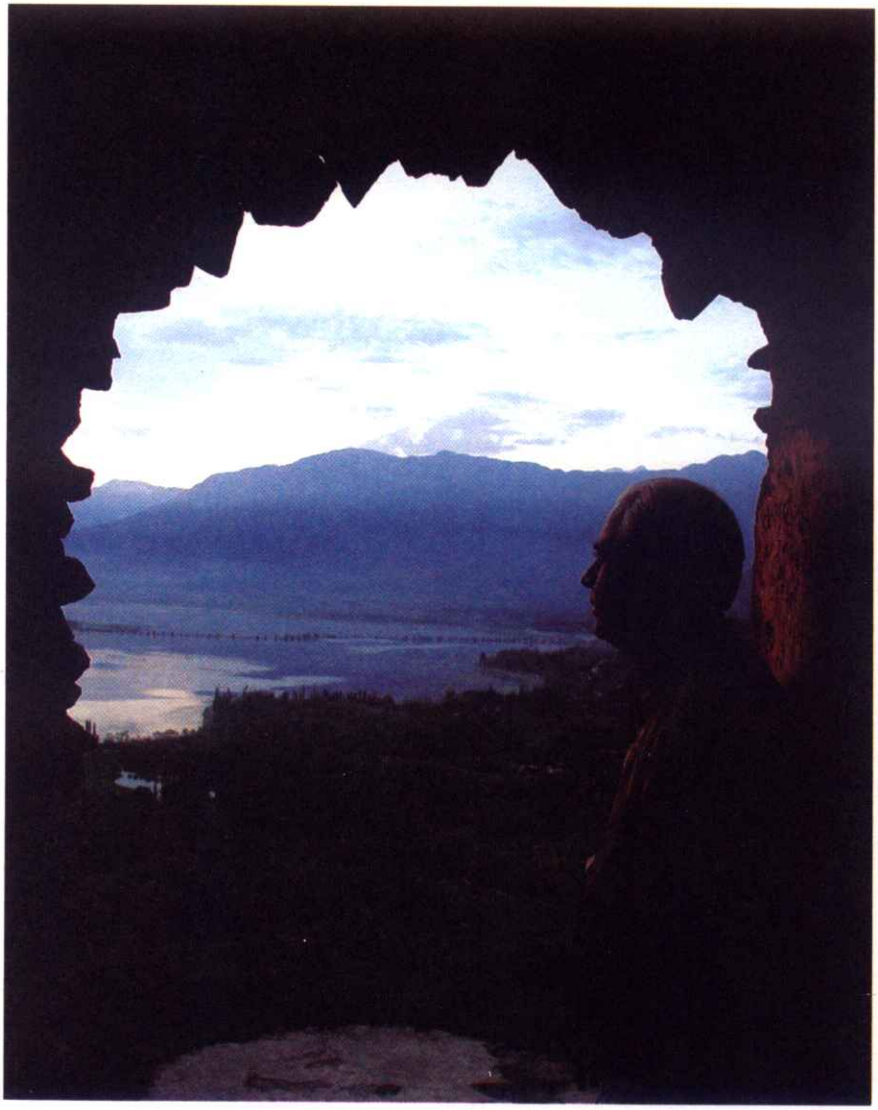
Vidarite parvatarajaraje
viniryayau taj jalam asu vegat.
Vegena sahdena ca sarvabhutan
Samtrasayanam kutilais tarangaih.
Himacalabhair gaganam sprsadbhih. (verses 175-180)

"The waters gushed out swiftly with force when the king of the best mountains had been broken. All the beings were terrified with its violent rush and sound as it overflowed the mountain tops with curved waves, like the Himalaya touching the sky."

It further mentions that when the water of the lake was disappearing, Jalodbhava resorted to magic and created darkness all round. The world became quite invisible. The on-rush of the huge mass of water through the gorge near the present-day Baramulla must have caused terrible floods down the river inundating large areas in its course. The Jhelum river flowing into the Jhelum valley (in present-day Pakistan), being one of the main tributaries of the great Indus, must have also got flooded which, in turn, would have submerged vast areas in southern Indus basin. Consequently, other tributaries of the Indus, such as Ravi, Satluj and the now-dry, Saraswati, among other rivers, must have been adversely affected due to the back-lash of the floods. The pre-Harrapan settlements on the banks of these rivers would also have suffered enormously.

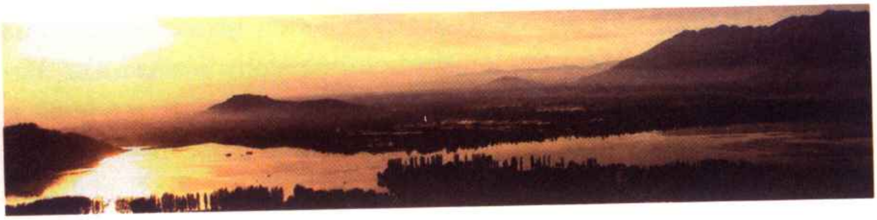
It is believed by geologists that the existing lakes such as Dal, Nagin, Anchar, Hokursar and Manasbal lakes are the remnants of the original Satisar lake. Beyond Baramulla, the present day river Jhelum follows the old water-shed formed as a result of the desiccation. Presumably, the draining out process would have taken years and out of this cataclysm, a *Heaven on Earth* emerged, fit for reclamation.

~ *Chapter 2* ~
Heaven on Earth



A View from Parimahal, Srinagar

A Geographical Overview



A Perspective from Parimahal

The great valley of Kashmir is one of the most picturesque valleys of the world. It is situated between 33° N latitude and 76° E longitude and 34° N latitude and 74° E longitude in the extreme northern region of the Indian subcontinent. Ensconced within the Great Himalayan Range, (about 17,000 ft. ASL) on the north-east and the Pir-Panjal range (about 15,000 ft. ASL) on the south-east and, while running almost parallel in the shape of a bean for nearly 140 kms with an average width of 40 kms, it forms the mountainous basin of the Vitasta (Jhelum) river - a region lying between the Karakoram range in the north and the Pir-Panjal stretching from the south-east to the south-west. The Valley is more or less flat with an average altitude of 1500 meters above sea level. It occupies an area of about 5300 sq. kms.

The Central Himalayan Axis, after its bifurcation near Kulu, while branching towards the north-west, is known as the Zanskar range which terminates in the high twin-peaks of Nun-Kun. The other branch running due west is known as the Dhauladhar range which, upon its further extension into the north-west, is known as the highly picturesque range of Pir-Panjal. This range is conspicuous in many parts of the Punjab including that of the north-east side of Pakistan. Between these two branches of the said Central Himalayan Axis lies the longitudinal valley of Kashmir.

The ranges of mountains which surround the Valley on all sides, except the narrow gorge of the Vitasta (Jhelum) at Baramulla, attain towards the north-east and north-west a generally high altitude. Some peaks rise above 18,000 feet on the south-western border. The Pir-Panjal, being at an elevation of about 14,000 feet above sea level, is comparatively at a lower altitude. The mountain passes of this range, which were the great highways of the past, are the Pir-Panjal Pass (11,400 ft. ASL), Golahghar Pass (12,500 ft. ASL) and the Banihal Pass (9700 ft. ASL). Further, Tatakuti, Brahma and Sakal are among the highest peaks in this range, each having an elevation of about 15,500 ft. ASL.

The valley of Kashmir abounds in many glittering rivers, lakes, glaciers, mountain streams and waterfalls. The great river Vitasta (Jhelum), known as *Veth* among the Kashmiris, while meandering from its source at Verinag (in the south-east) in a serpentine course, leaves the Valley at the Baramulla gorge in the west. Its length from Verinag (south-east of the Valley) to Khadinyar (west of the Valley) [below Baramulla] is about 200 kms. The river is navigable between Khanabal (near Anantnag) and Khadinyar. Its main tributaries are Veshev, Arapeth, Rembyar, Dodganga, Sendh, Madhumati, and Krishnaganga.

With its wall of surrounding mountain ranges and owing to its unique geographical and topographical character, the Valley, being relatively isolated from the surrounding regions, has nourished a highly distinctive culture and civilization within its bosom.

The Abode of Gods

The valley of Kashmir occupies a unique geographical and topographical position. Its landscape has been bestowed with an invigorating climate, wonderful flora and fauna, limpid and ice-cold water in abundance, murmuring brooks, snow-clad mountains, perennial glaciers, lakes, water-falls, delicious fruits and a variety of aromatic flowers.

The composition of its graceful mountains, rivers, streams and lakes, studded with magnificent vegetation, is one of the most extraordinary tapestries woven by nature. Uplifting the spirit and casting a magical spell, Kashmir is where nature shows up in its extraordinary elegance, making it as one of the most beautiful spots of the earth. No wonder it has been referred to as the *Abode of Gods*.

There are ample references in the Nilmat Purana which extol the beauty and virtues of this sacred land and its peoples, such as:

Vaishampayanah
yaiva devi uma saiva kashmira nrpapungava.
Asit sarah purnajalam suramyam sumanoharam
kalparambha prabhrti yat pura manvantarani sat
asmin manvantare jatam visayam sumanoharam.
(Verses 12, 13)

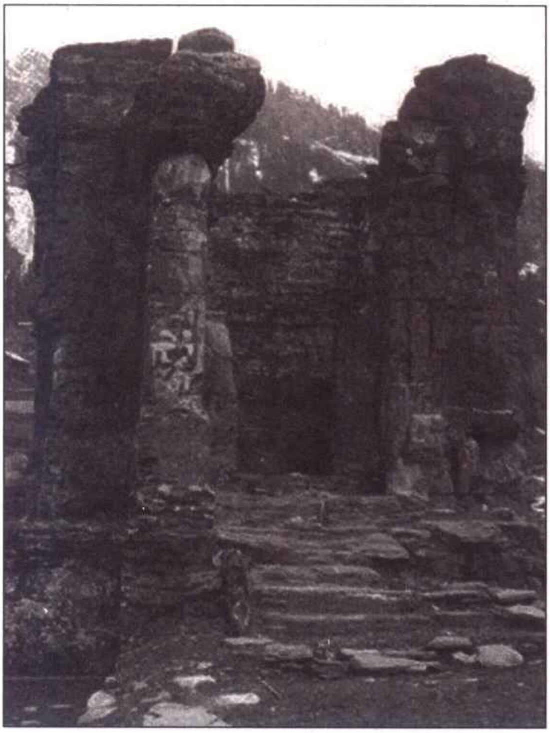
"Vaishampayana said: Goddess Uma is the same as Kashmira. O best amongst the kings, Kashmira, what was earlier an enjoyable, heart-enrapturing lake for six Manvantaras since the beginning of the Kalpa, became a beautiful territory in this Manvantara."

Shalimalakulam aphitam satphaladyaih samanvitam
svadhyayadhyana niratair yajnashilair janar yutam.
Tapasvibhir dharmaparair veda-vedangaparagaih
ksatriyaih sumahabhagaih sarvashastrastraparagaih.
(Verses 14,15).

"It is filled with rows of fully thriving paddy-fields and endowed with good fruits; where people perform yagyas and meditation ; where virtuous ascetics are accomplished in the Vedas and Vedangas; where highly prosperous Kshatriyas are well-versed in the use of all arms and weapons; where Vaishyas are engaged in earning the means of livelihood; where the land is crowned with auspicious temples of the gods and holy places."

The Name Kashmir

The existing name *Kashmir* appears to have been in use for at least the last 1500 years. Nilmat Purana mentions that since ancient times the Valley was variously called; *Satisar, Satidesha* or *Kaashmira.* Later, it assumed the name of *Kashyapmar* [i.e. Kashyap's (Kashyap Rishi's) mar (mass of water)] from which the name Kashmir appears to have been finally derived. Greek sources reveal that Ptolemy referred to Kashmir as *Kaspeira* (pronounced as *Kaspira*) while the early Chinese records referred to it as *Ki-pin* though Hiuen Tsiang called it as *Kia-shi-mi-lo.* Traditional Indian literature refers to Kashmir as *Kaashmira* or *Shardapeeth* (the abode of Sharda, the goddess of learning, knowledge and wisdom). In Kashmiri language it is called *Kasheer.*



Sharda temple (the iconic representation of Kashmir - also known as Shardapeeth; the ancient name of Kashmir, the abode of Sharda, the goddess of learning, knowledge & wisdom) located in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

~ Chapter 3 ~

Early Human Settlements

Proliferation of Settlements

Archaeologists believe that human settlements existed in the higher reaches of the Valley (at 7000 ft., above sea level) before the waters of the Satisar got drained out. It is also propounded that these settlements were probably of Old Stone Age (Palaeolithic) stage followed by the ones of New Stone Age (Neolithic) settlements. The approximate period assigned to these human settlements by archaeologists is about 7000 B.C. or even earlier.

In course of time, after the desiccation of the Satisar lake, more advanced human settlements of the New Stone Age and Early Bronze Age (Chalcolithic) people appear on the scene. The archaeological remains of such settlements (after 3500 B.C.) have been found in the lower reaches of the Valley such as the pit dwellings at Burzahama located in the north of Srinagar.

Aryan and Tribal Influx

Western historians generally believe that before the influx of the Aryans, the original inhabitants of the Indian sub-continent were mostly Dravidians (supposed to be from Mediterranean stock), Mongoloids, proto-Austroloids aborigines like Uraons and Santhals and other non-Aryan tribes scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Indian sub-continent. They believe that the so called Indo-Aryan\Indo-Iranian tribes made their inroads into the north-west and North India (partly now in Pakistan) through the Khyber Pass, Hindu Kush and Pamirs sometime between 2000 B.C. and 1500 B.C.

According to these historians and archeologists, these so called Aryan invaders are supposed to have penetrated deep into the Indus basin and then into Punjab and encountered Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan

civilization in the beginning of the 2^{nd} millennium B.C. These Aryans are supposed to have destroyed the Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan people and their urban settlements. It is generally believed by these scholars that the culmination of Harappan culture took place somewhere between 1750 to 1500 B.C. and the same was probably brought about due to the onslaught of the Aryans who attacked and destroyed these urban settlements in and around the Indus basin.

However, this invasion theory is still considered untenable by many well known historians and archeologists on the ground that there is no direct evidence for relying on the assumption that these Aryan speaking people actually invaded and wiped out the Harappan civilization. Now, before we are able to throw some light on this subject, we may, right from the Neolithic stage of human development, examine the ethnic and linguistic proliferation into the world in general and Central Asia and North India in particular.

The main social division and ethnic characteristics of the humans, as we know of them today, are discernible from the Neolithic period in various parts of the world. The broad main divisions of various races, according to historians are supposed to be: i) Negroids, ii) Semites, iii) Mongoloids and iv) Nordic.

(i) Negroids: They comprise Bushmen, Negroes, Elamites, Andamanese, Islander and Austroloids.

(ii) Semites: These include Egyptians, Sumerians, probably Dravidians, Melanesians, Polynesians, Peruvians and Maoris of New Zealand.

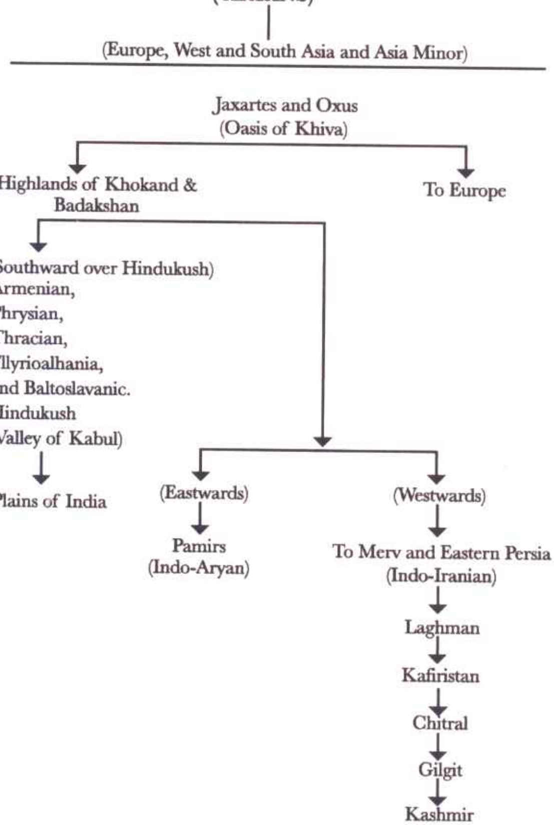
(iii) Mongoloids: They are identified mainly in China, Burma, Indonesia, Malaya, Japan, Amerindians, Mexico, Eskimos, Mongols, Lapps, Turks, Huns, Estonians, Gurkhas and Tibetans.

(iv) Nordics: They comprise Kelts, Scandinavians, Italians, Scythians,

Teutons Slovenians, Armenians, Ghouls, Medes, Persians and Indo-Aryans.

According to some authorities the Nordic people, who are variously called as *Aryan Speaking People* or *Indo Europeans* or *Indo-Germanic*, settled between Poland and Central Asia and are seen to have migrated in northward, southward and eastward directions some time around 2000 B.C. The westward migration comprised that of the Greeks, Latins, Celts, Teutons, Anatolian (Hittites) Baltic and Slavonic people. The southward movement was in the direction of Caucasus, Iranian table-land (mid-eastern civilization) and Kassites in Babylon. According to some historians and linguists, the eastern migration of these linguistic groups to north-east Syria and thereafter to India took place around 14^{th} century B.C. There are still others who say that Indo Germanics or Indo-Europeans migrated towards Central Asia, European Steppes (north of Black Sea), Central and West Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia. The supposed migrations of Indo-European linguistic groups according to scholars like George Grierson and others can be shown in the manner indicated overleaf.

MIGRATION OF INDO-EUROPEAN GROUPS
(ARYANS)



George Grierson and others have suggested that one of the clans of Indo-Europeans, who called themselves as *Aryans* migrated eastwards towards the Highlands of Kokand and Badakshan from their settlements in Jaxartes and Oxus region known as the *Oasis of Khiva.* In context to this, Grierson says:

"Thence still a united people, they worked their way up the courses of these rivers into the highland of Kokand and Badakshan where they

split up into two sections, one portion marching south over the Hindu Kush into the valley of Kabul, and thence into the plains of India and the other eastwards towards the Pamirs and westwards towards what is now Merv and Eastern Persia. After the separation, the common Aryan speech developed on two different lines and became on one hand, the parents of Indo-Aryans languages and, on the other, that of Iranian family of languages..."

"The only other Iranian language with which we are called upon to deal are Ghalchah languages of the Pamirs. The home of these tongues, Wakht, Shigni, Sarqoli, Shkashami and Munjani... but the last name has crossed the Hindu Kush by the Dora Pass and is also spoken in the Leotkuh valley of the Chitral, which considerably forms the standard language of Munjan, and has developed into an independent dialect. The spill of an Iranian language over the great watershed of the Hindu Kush is but a repetition of what occurred centuries ago when the Aryans first settled in the Pamirs. At that early time, if linguistic evidence may be accepted, some of the Aryans crossed these passes and settled in what is now Laghman, Kafiristan, Chitral, Gilgit and Kashmir. They migrated at a period when all the typical characteristics of the Iranian languages had not yet become fixed and in their new home their tongue developed on its own lines, partly Iranian and partly Indo-Aryan. The Aryans of India proper who had entered the Punjab by the valley of the Kabul, had little intercourse or sympathy with these tribes and nicknamed them *Pisachas*."

According to some scholars like Dr. Hoernle, C. V. Vaidya and others, the Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians entered India in two hordes by different routes and at different times. On the basis of linguistic study, Dr. Hornle and Grierson showed that two races had penetrated into India; one long-headed and another broad-headed. C. V. Vaidya had dubbed them as *Suryavanshis* and *Chandravanshis*, respectively, on the basis of the Puranas. These scholars also indicate that the second

Aryan incursion via Chitral-Gilgit-Kashmir route was like a wedge into the areas occupied by the earlier Aryan settlers.

How far these conclusions drawn are really tenable are matters that deserve speculation when there are other scholars who vehemently oppose these views by propounding that the Aryan speaking people were the autochthons (indigenous and original settlers) of North India. Similarly, there are number of other theories which show that the so called Aryans did not belong to a particular racial group but were Sanskrit speaking people, irrespective of their racial background.

Original Roots & Aryan Homeland

The probe into the cultural roots of the Kashmiris, including that of the Brahmins of the Valley, before their settlement there in the remote past, becomes a challenging proposition primarily because of the controversy surrounding the question of original homeland of the early Aryans. Many alternative propositions with regard to their original nativity have been put across. In order to make a fair appraisal, it will be pertinent to summarise them as follows:

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSITIONS WITH REGARD TO THE ORIGINAL NATIVITY OF EARLY ARYANS

NAME OF THE AUTHOR	LOCATION	REMARKS/ EVIDENCE
B.G. Tilak (1925) R.N. Dandekar (1958) V.M. Apte (1959) R.K. Prabhu (1964) S. Madabhushi (1993)	Artic Region	Neotectonic, climatological, atsronomical (evidence in Rigveda) and geographical in support of the Artic home

Prof. Max Muller	The Pamirs	Central Asia (Homeland)
Prof. Dr. O. Schrader of Breslau	The Lower Volga	Conclusions drawn from the study of Slavanic languages
Dr. Peter Giles	Hungary	Linguistic study and Aryan relics
Dr. Latham	Scandinavia	Linguistic Study
Dr. Hirts	South-east shore of Baltic	Linguistic Study
Dr. Sirdesai	Lake Balkhash	Comparison with *Land of Seven Rivers*
J.D. Nadirshaw	Azarbaijan	The area which is named in Airyana Vanjo as *Araxe* river compared to Daita of the Avesta
Dr. A.C. Das and majority of the Indian Scholars	Sapta Sindhu	Supposed to be the original Home of the Aryans i.e. Punjab, Sind and Kurukshetra area, where seven rivers flow i.e Indus, Jhelem, Chinab, Ravi, Sutlej, Bias and Sarasvati (which is now dry)
M.A. Pithawala	Syr and Amu Darya, Duab and Merv-Badakshan area	Zend Avesta and Venidad description
H. Hiras	Southern Russia	Volga valley

K.M. Munshi S. Chaturvedi R. Singh M.L. Bhargava V.M. Kaikini Sher Simha K. Kapur N.B. Pavgee	Kashmir/ Punjab area	Geographical, linguistic and ethnic evidence
Adelung	The valley of Kashmir	On the basis of comparative philology
V. Rangacharya	Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan Uplands	On the basis of temperate-zone-home and source of fire-cult etc.

If we peruse the above mentioned proposed locations it will be seen that the range of the supposed Aryan belt engulfs a vast area from north to south (65° latitude to 35° latitude) and east to west (75° longitude to 25° longitude). Such a location would comprise north-east of Ural Mountains, Yenisey river delta touching Kara Sea (Arctic Ocean), Scandinavia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Balkhash Lake area in Kazakh, Bukhara, Tashkent, Yugoslavia, Azarbaijan-Armenia belt, Iranian Plateau, Afghanistan, Pamirs, Hindu Kush, north-west Pakistan, Indus Valley, Kashmir, Indian East Punjab, Himachal and Haryana.

Let us first examine what B.G.Tilak says with regard to his Arctic Home theory. In his original formulation, Tilak, on the basis of existence of different chronological information, astronomical data, climatological and geographical evidence in the Rigvedic and post-Vedic literature, propounded that the early Aryans had their original home on the banks of the Kara Sea (Arctic Ocean). He deduces that

the Aryans originated as a single group some time between 10,000 and 7000 years B.C. in this part of the Arctic Circle, which was then a warmer region. But, when the climate became colder they migrated southward and bifurcated into two groups; one went towards the west of the Ural mountains and the other towards the east of this mountain range. According to Tilak and others, the Siberian area, prior to 4000 B.C., was quite warm which, in effect, would have facilitated the maximum development of the Rigvedic people. Thereafter, it appears that the said area became colder as a result of which these Rigvedic people were forced to migrate towards the south due to which they eventually settled in regions of Kashmir/Punjab.

Prof. Max Muller proposed that the original home of the Aryans had been the Pamirs from which region the Aryans spread to other areas in the south, east and west. Prof. Dr. O. Schrader and H. Hiras propounded that their original home must have been in the region of Volga valley in southern Russia. Such a conclusion was drawn from his study of Slavonic languages. Dr. Peter Giles and Dr. Latham, on the basis of linguistic studies, suggested that such an area would lie within Hungary and Scandinavia, respectively. Dr. Hirts, on the basis of linguistic study, thought that the south-eastern shore of the Baltic to be the home of the Aryans. Dr. Sirdesai was of the view that the early Aryans must have settled around Balkhash lake in Kazakhstan on the basis of the comparison made by him with the land of seven rivers [Indus, Vitasta, Chinab, Ravi, Sutlej, Bias and Saraswati (which is now dry) flowing within the area comprising north-west Pakistan, Indian Punjab, Sindh and Kurukshetra and also referred to as *Sapta-sindhu*].

J.D. Nadirshaw argued that the most likely area where the early Aryans must have settled, would be Azerbaijan region. This, conclusion was drawn on the basis that there were similarities in the names of rivers mentioned to be located in *Airyanem Vaejah* (which approximately means

"expanse of the Aryans, i.e. Iranians"; the "mythical homeland" of Iranians as referred to in the Zoroastrian Zend-Avesta, which is one of the Ahura Mazda's sixteen perfect lands) It is considered the best of all places. However, Venidad, one of the Zoroastrian law-books, claims that there are two months of summer and ten of winter there, and it suffers from flooding at the end of winter. M.A. Pithawalla thinks that the original home-land of the Aryans, before their split, was the region of Syramu Darya Doab including Merv-Badakshan area as is evident from the descriptions in Zend-Avesta and Venidad.

Dr. A.C. Das and majority of the Indian Scholars vehemently argue that the Aryans were autochthon (original inhabitants) of the land comprising the Sapta-sindhu. According to them Aryans never came from outside, but were indigenous to the land from the very beginning. On the contrary, they suggest that these very Aryans established colonies beyond the frontiers of Sapta-sindhu towards the west.

K. M. Munshi, S. Chaturvedi, M. L. Bhargava, K. Kapur, N. B. Pavgee and others on the basis of geographical, ethnic and linguistic factors as well as on the basis of Vedic literature, have strongly asserted that the original home of the Aryans appears to be Kashmir/Punjab region. It may be mentioned here that, as early as about 1800 A.D., Adelung, the father of comparative philology, placed the Aryan home to be in Kashmir. Similarly, P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar asserts, "it is in the trans-Himalayan lands we have to trace the germ of the Aryan culture."

V. Rangacharya says:

"The migrations of culture, religion and customs, moreover, was in those days generally from the east to the west. All these would indicate, in Prof. Vishvanatha's opinion, that the Aryan cradle was to be in the Himalayan region, roughly extending from the valley of the seven rivers to the source of the Ganges and Jamuna. He infers from

a passage in the Rigveda that Agni worship was prevalent in the 4th millennium B.C. and the Indra's worship in the next and that it was in the latter period that the Aryan culture spread to the west."

V. Rangacharya further opines:

"The probability of the Kashmir-Bactrian-Punjab hypothesis is, in my opinion, not less strong than that of the Europeans. All the arguments of original temperate-zone-home for the Aryans can be applied to this area. Further tradition refers to the trans-Himalayan source of the fire-cult. We may thus conclude that about B.C. 3000 a section of the dolichocephalic (long-headed) Mediterranean people occupying the region of Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan uplands, the lands of the archaic Vedic and Pisachi dialects, developed a sacrificial cult and during the next millennium, gradually spread themselves across the western Asiatic plateau, influenced the Babylonian and Egyptian civilizations and, penetrating the European plain through the Caspian, Black Sea and Balkan regions, laid the foundations of Aryan Europe."

The discussions about the arguments in favour or against each of the above mentioned theories are beyond the scope of this treatise. Our main purpose, in context to the subject, is to form a general idea about the most probable area where the earliest Aryans or *Aryan Speaking People* had made their home. It would appear that the majority of scholars, linguists, archaeologists and ethnologists, certainly are of the view that those Aryans or *Aryan Speaking People*, whether we call them Indo-Europeans, Indo-Aryans or Indo-Iranians, with whom we are immediately concerned, are mostly seen moving in various directions within the geographical confines of Asia Minor and Armenia-Azarbaijan region in the west, Kurukshetra area in the east, Caucasus Central Asia and Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan uplands in the north and Indus Valley in the south within the time frame of

4000 B.C. to 1500 B.C. The most important pointer is that there are very sanguine arguments in favour of the settlement of the parent body of the Aryans in the Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan uplands region between 4000 B.C. and 3000 B.C.

Now, let us see what our others sources like Rigvedic literature, Brahamanas, Sutras, Puranas in general and Nilmata Purana, in particular, as well as the latest archeological research tell us about the overall ethnology, culture and language of various civilizations in Central Asia, Mesopotamia, Iran, Baluchistan, Indus Valley and Punjab (north-west of India) between the 6th millennium and 2nd millennium B.C. Most of the scholars, western and eastern, believe that the ethnology and the whole chronology of the early settlers in north-west of India, Indus Valley, Baluchistan, Mesopotamia, Iran, Pamirs, Hindu Kush, Kashmir and Punjab is based on the premise that the Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranians entered for the first time into north-west India, Punjab and Sindh between 2000-1500 B.C. and destroyed non-Aryan settlements in and around Indus Valley. According to them the Rigveda, followed by the other Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads and Sutras, were compiled after 1750 B.C. This would imply that the Rigvedic Aryans were posterior to Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan culture. It is also believed that the Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians entered Kashmir during this period. The culmination of the Harappan culture around 1750 B.C. is attributed to the supposed onslaught of these Indo-Aryan invaders who are stated to have destroyed the advanced Harappan urban civilization. These conclusions are supposedly based on various archeological findings of pre-Harappan era and other contemporaneous findings in Mesopotamia/Sumeria which are supported by references in Vedic literature. According to some of these scholars, such a view is fortified by the mythological story of Rigvedic Lord Indra who is stated to have destroyed the habitations of Dasas, Dasyus, Asuras etc. (supposed to be the non-Aryan inhabitants of the Indus Valley settlements) by

incendiary means and by flooding the Mohenjo-Daro, Harappan, Chinodaro and other cities on the bank of the Indus effected by removing the obstacles from the water reservoirs on higher reaches etc.

It is also professed by these archeologists and historians that the Harappan culture actually started from 2500 B.C. and reached a mature stage towards the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.

Similarly, according to some of them, the Aryan and non-Aryan settlements inside Kashmir valley are not earlier than the end of 2nd millennium B.C.

It has been more or less established geologically that the valley of Kashmir was a lake even before the early Pleistocene age (Geological Period) and must have got desiccated sometime before the 4th millennium B.C. The earliest human settlement starting from the early and middle Pleistocene period have been found by archeologists in the higher reaches (above 7000 ft. ASL) of the Valley. The Neolithic settlements of Burzahom (in Kashmir) have been chronologically placed between 4000 B.C. to 2000 B.C. by H.D. Sankalia and others. However, according to F.R. Allchin and others, they are, in fact, considered contemporaneous to Neolithic Stage II of Early Harappan of Greater Indus System i.e. between 3500 to 3000 B.C.

Questions Unanswered

The above chronological, ethnic and cultural scenario expounded by some of the scholars raises many pertinent questions for which no satisfactory answers are available. Some of these are :-

(1) What is the concrete evidence, direct or indirect, that the Indo-Aryan or Indo-Iranian tribes came from outside for the first time and were not the natives of the north and north-west of India?

(2) What is the evidence that the Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians actually invaded the Indus Valley settlements and destroyed them and that too in the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C.?

(3) What is the conclusive proof that the Rigvedic Aryans were posterior to Harappans and not anterior to the latter?

(4) On linguistic basis, what is the position of so called Indo-European languages in context to Indo-Aryan Rigvedic Sanskrit?

(5) What is the validity of factors which do not assign antiquity of Rigveda earlier than 1500 B.C.?

(6) What is the concrete evidence that would prove that the Indo-Aryans or Indo-Iranians were not the original inhabitants of north-west India before their dispersion towards the west including Central Asia and Europe. What are the strong grounds on which the theory of so called, *Aryan Invasion of India* from Central Asia or from other parts of Europe, and not the other-way round, is based?

(7) Was the sudden culmination of Mohenjodaro and Harappan culture due to the invasion by the Aryan tribes or due to some other cause?

(8) Is there any authoritative evidence to show that Mohenjo-Daro and Harrrapan people were all Dravidians?

All these questions arise because various explanations given by many scholars are mostly hypothetical and conjectural. The purpose of probing into the ethnic, linguistic, social and cultural background of various tribes living in the northern and north-western parts of the sub-continent from remote antiquity (say between 6th and 2nd millennium B.C.) is to form an acceptable picture about the early contemporaneous settlers in the valley of Kashmir after its desiccation.

Most of the historians assume that the Aryans invaded India around 1500 B.C. But are these historians standing on genuine ground in putting forth this assumption? A.L. Basham is skeptical and says, "Direct testimony to the assumed fact is lacking and no tradition of an early home beyond the frontiers survives in India."

T. Burrow in *Early Aryans* also admits, "The Aryan invasion of India is recorded in no written document and it cannot be yet traced archaeologically."

G.R. Dales goes even further and says, "Aryans have not yet been identified archaeologically and no one has any exact knowledge of the date when the Aryans first entered the Indus Valley area."

Mortimer Wheeler, in *Early India and Pakistan* concedes that, "It is best to admit that no proto-Aryan material culture has yet been identified in India."

As such, the theory of invasion of the Indo-Aryan tribes as foreigners is neither evident nor the chronology is based on any solid ground. In view of the above, the question of destruction of Harappan settlements by Aryan invaders is likewise conjectural. Furthermore, the issue of the original homeland for the Aryan speaking people and the theory of invasion and its chronology has not been definitely solved and is still a big question mark. So, historically and archaeologically, there is no reason to adhere to the existing belief on this issue which has been held by most of the historians and archeologists. Further, such an assumption is also in direct conflict with the traditional views in the Indian literature like Vedas, Brahmanas and Puranas. There is no reason not to give credence to the indigenous documentary evidence and traditions.

The question of original homeland of Rigvedic Aryans, their migrations and supposed encounter with the Harappan in the north-

west India, chronologically and otherwise, is still a moot point. There also appears to be no genuine basis to reckon Harappan culture as being anterior to the Rigvedic Aryans. If it is assumed that the Aryans were posterior to the Harappans then the Vedic and Puranic evidence, including other indigenous literature, would appear to be fallacious.

Chronology: Traditional and Modern Sources

According to Puranic, astrological and Vedic literature, the date of the commencement of Kali Era (Kaliyuga) was 3102 B.C., which was also recognised by well known western scholars like Prof. Buhlar and others. This, ipso-facto means that the Rigvedic Aryan speaking people were already settled in the northern region before 3102 B.C.

In his latest research work, *The Cross-a Hindu Symbol*, (1994), K. P. Chon has this to say:

"In Kashmir a Hindu Pandit community, even now uses the Saptarishi era for their reckoning. It is now said to be 3101 B.C. or so. This will mean that the first Saptarishi Marichi was living 5101 years ago. The evidence that a prudent historian collects also points out that the Rigvedic happenings of earliest hymns have taken place around this time. But, what is to be borne into account is the fact that there already existed a high culture and civilization at this point of time. Indra is stated to have destroyed many castles 'built artistically' and there were many equals to Indra. Thus, an advanced civilization was already there before the Saptarishis."

K.D. Sethna in his latest treatise, *Karpasa in Pre-historic India* has come to far reaching conclusions. He finds that the Rigvedics were not posterior to Harappans but were remotely anterior to the latter. He also discounts the belief that the Harappans were culturally much

different from the Rigvedic Aryans. He says, "In our time scheme the type of work exemplified by the existing Sutras would begin somewhere in the early period of the Harappan culture" (i.e between 2500 and 2000 B.C.). Thus, the end of the Rigvedic composition would be about 3000 B.C. or little thereafter and its commencement would go back to at least 3500 B.C. The intervening age, say from 3000 to 2300 B.C., would see the great development in culture, religion and language of the later Vedic literature.

Dr. S.S. Misra's latest book, *The Aryan Problem- A Linguistic Approach*, while referring to the above mentioned treatise by Dr. Sethna, observes:

"The date of Rigveda as proposed above as 5000 B.C., on the evidence of recent linguistic researches, is not contradicted by this. The Vedic stage may take more time than assumed by Sethna. Thus, naturally, we agree with him on his principal thesis that Vedic literature precedes the Indus Civilization."

It may be mentioned here that according to the Puranic and Astrological literature, the chronology of the ancient Rigvedics and non-Aryan people would appear to start from Kashayapa period i.e. 6560 B.C.

Dr. K. D. Sethna in his book, *Ancient India in a New Light*, states that the chronology of the ancient pre-history could be reconstructed on the basis of traditional Puranic literature, astrological data and the information supplied by Meghesthenes. He has proposed a chronology, based on Prithu, the first asterism in the Saptarishi calendar (*Loukakiabda*). This era is still in vogue in Kashmir. This represents the asterism of the Great Bear in the various Nakshatras. The Great Bear remains in each nakshatra for a hundred years. According to Varahamira, the first asterism was reckoned from 3377 B.C. Vriddha Garga (another well known astrologer of yore) reckoned that the first asterism in Aswani Nakshatra took place in 6777 B.C.

However, the Loukaki era or *Kashmirabda* begins from 3076 B.C. i.e. 26 years after Kali era (i.e. after 3102 B.C.).

K. Venkatchalam in his book, *Chronology of Kashmir-Reconstructed*, places the chronology as follows:

1. The beginning of organized ruling dynasties in Kashmir starts from 3450 B.C.
2. Gonanda I -3230 B.C.
3. Birth of Lord Krishna -3220 B.C.
4. Mahabharata war - 3130 B.C.
5. Start of Kaliyuga era - 3102 B.C.
6. Saptarishi era - 3076 B.C.

Kalhana, in his *Rajtarangini* states that Kurus and Pandus lived 653 years after Kaliyuga, i.e. in 2449 B.C. (refer to Rajtarangini: 1-48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 & 54) and not at the close of Dwaper Yuga (i.e. 3101 B.C.). But at 1-55 and 1-56 of Rajtarangini, Kalhana clearly states that the King Yudhishtra ruled when the Saptarishis (Great Bear) stood in Magha Nakshatra and the date of his regime was 2526 years before Saka era. But scholars like K. Venkatchalam and V. Venkatacharya clearly state that the start of Saka era astrologically cannot be 78 A.D. but 551 B.C. This chronology would, ipso facto, put Yudhishtra's reign at the close of the Dwaper Yuga (i.e. 2526 + 551 = 3077 B.C.) and not 653 years after Kali era (i.e. 3102 B.C. - 653 = 2449 B.C.) It would therefore mean that Kalhana reckoned the first asterism (in Ashvani Nakshatra) of 100 year cycle of Saptarishi to taken place in 3377 B.C. instead of 6777 B.C. so that the emergece of the Pandus and Kurus would correspond to the time when the Saptarishi (Ursa Major or Great Bear) constellation stood in Magha Nakshatra (10th place from Ashvani) i.e. between 2340 B.C. to 2449 B.C.). Kalhana

appears to have followed Varahamihra's date of first asterism (i.e. 3377 B.C. in Ashvani Nakshatra) and not that of Vriddha Garga's, which was 6777 B.C. The above mentioned chronology is based on Puranic traditions, Kalhana's *Rajtarangini* and astrological data.

In a paper titled *Era Aberrations by Kalhana in Rajatarangini* posted on the internet by Brigadier Rattan Kaul, while making an in-depth analysis of the chronology of some important historical dates and events given by Kalhana in the Rajtarangni he says:

"As a result of various surveys, carbon dating, archaeological finds, artifacts, common usage of the era in Bharatvarsha {Indain subcontinent}, Indus Valley excavations and survey results in Kashmir, it has been proved that Saptarishi-Samvat is indigenous to Bharatvarsha, connected with pre-Harappan civilisation, tracing back to the Palaeolithic period; about 6000 B.C. ±. Apparently, as the time elapsed, this period was taken as the base for Laukika-era {Saptarishi-Samvat}. Arya Bhatta, an ancient Brahmin writer on Astronomy, born in Kusuma-Pura (Modern Patan; 476 – 550 B.C.}, author of *Aryabhattiya*, which is somewhat an amendment to earlier work of Sage Maya {*Surya Siddhanta*}, is the calculator of this era, which was widely accepted and used in Bharatvarsha and Kashmir. Earlier calendar in Bharatvarsha was with 60 cycles of 60 years each, 27 Nakshatras and twelve months. Notices by the Greek historians, Pliny and Arrian suggest that during the Mauryan Dynasty {322 –185 B.C.}, the calendar used in Bharatvarsha began in 6676 B.C. It is very likely that this was the earlier Saptarishi calendar which began in 6676 B.C."...

"Arya Bhatta's (476-550 B.C.) calculations and tradition places Mahabharata war to 3137 B.C.; 35 years before the transition of Dvapar Yug to Kaliyug. Arya Bhatta stated that Kaliyug started 3600 years before him, when he was 23 years old, making the start of Kali-

Samvat as 3102 B.C. *Surya Siddhanta*, a document evolved earlier than *Aryabhattiya*, states that sun was 54 degrees away from vernal equinox when Kali-Samvat started on a new moon day..."

"From all confirmatory astronomical calculations Kali-Samvat is believed to have begun when Krishna "died" at the age of 125 on Friday 17/18 Feburary 3102 B.C. at 14:27:30 hours..."

"The commencement of Laukika-era or Saptarishi-Samvat has indirect connection with Kali-Samvat. Saptarishi was in Maghah Nakshatra 75 years prior to Kali-Samvat and remained so for next 25 years after Kali-Samvat had commenced..."

"It is on 1st *Chaitra Shukla Paksh* {bright half of the lunar month of March-April} of 3076 B.C. Saptarishi {Ursa Major} moved into Poorva Nakshatra in 3076 B.C. and Laukika-era or Saptarishi-Samvat commenced..."

"The difference in what was being adopted before Arya Bhatta's calculation has connection with the present Laukika-era or Saptarishi-Samvat and a remarkable coincidence of 60 cycles of 60 years each totalling to 3600 years. Earlier Saptarishi-Samvat was a repetitive i.e 6676 B.C. less 3600 years coinciding with commencement of current Saptarishi-Samvat. Around 500 A.D. another major review of the Indian calendar was attempted by Varaha Mihir, a Kashmiri Aryan Saraswat Brahmin {505- 587 AD; some scholars state that he was born at Ujjain} and others used *Nakshatra* references and found that Saptarishi {Ursa Major} constellation was indeed in Magha Nakshatra at the time of the Mahabharata War. While Arya Bhatta declared the War to have occurred in 3137 B.C., Varaha Mihir assigned its date to 2449 B.C. {653 Kali-Samvat}. This discrepancy arose, perhaps from the different assumptions regarding the Nakshatras; actually 27, as correctly calculated by Arya Bhatta and Varaha Mihir's, as against 28 Nakshatras as given in Atharv Veda, which was found to

be incorrect. Only 27 Nakshatras fitted the well made astronomical calendar propounded in *Surya Sidhanta* and later in Arya Bhatta's work, *Aryabhattiya*."

He further states, "Brahmins of Kashmir for long have been associating the commencement of Laukika-era with that of the entry of Aryan Saraswat Brahmins into Kashmir. Laukika calendar came into being in Bharatvarsha as a result of the revision of major astronomical calendars by Arya Bhatta's in 550 B.C. With Kali-Samvat having been established, the 25 years gap surprisingly coincides with probable date of *Swargarohanam* {entry into heaven} of Pandava's. It is also said that Sage Vyasa dedictated the epic to Ganapathi only after Swargarohanam of Pandava's. Thus, possibly, to my mind, commencement of Laukika-era {Saptarishi-Samvat} can be attributed to the dates of Swargarohanam of Pandava's, which would have occured so on an auspicious day. Pandava's left for their last journey on the 12th day {Dwadashi} of *Aswayuja* or *Ashvin Shukla Paksh* {bright-half of the lunar month of Sept.-Oct.} when Yudishthir was 128 Years old {3102 B.C.} and their Swaragarhonam is dated about 25 years later.... Lord Krishna was born on 8th day {*Ashtami*} of *Shravan Krishna Paksh* {dark-half of the lunar month of July-August} just after midnight in Taurus {*Mithun Lagana*} and was approximately 4 years younger to Yudishthir { August 3227 B.C.; roughly 125 years before Kali-Samvat}."

"As per Rajatarangini calculation, Yudishthir took over as king 2526 years before Saka Era {Verse 56 Taranga 1}, corresponding to 653 Kali-Samvat, 628 Laukika-era, {2449 B.C.}. This makes Yudishthir 780 years old when he was coronated. The verse quoted is silent as to whether this was Yudishthir's first or second coronation. If it pertains to first coronation, then, as per Mahabharata Chronology, his coronation took place 81 years pre-Kali-Samvat, 106 years pre Laukika-era corresponding to August 3183 B.C. and Yudishthira

being 699 years old. Even by the Mahabharata Standards, this age is beyond comprehension as Yudishthira, as per the astronomical calculations/chronology, was 128 years old when he coronated his grandson Parikshit at Hastinapur {Kali-Samvat 1 pre-Laukika-era 24, corresponding to Jan/Feb 3101 B.C.}. The date Yudishthir died is not known but his *Swargarohanam* {death} may have been 25/26 years later {roughly around Kali-Samvat 25-26/ Laukika-era 1-2, corresponding to 3076 B.C.}."

"Nowhere in the entire eight Taranga, directly or indirectly, the basis of quoting this Samvat {653 Kali-Samvat} has been explained, which has been used as the beginning era of the chronology of kings of Kashmir. *Brhatsamhita* of Varaha Mihir is referred to and apparently the date of Bharata War {Mahabharata} has been taken as 2449 B.C. as propagated by Varaha Mihir in 6th century A.D., which corresponds to Kali-Samvat 653. Strangely, only this aspect of Varaha Mihir's composition has been taken; Saptarishis moving from one Nakshatra to another in 100 years and commencement dates of Laukika-era and Kali-Samvat have been taken from age old astronomical works of Arya Bhatta and others. This has resulted in post-dating of chronology in Rajatarangini by the author by more than 653 years, starting with Gonanda-I."

It would, therefore, appear that Mahabharata war, whatever is the actual chronology, has to be placed either in 2449 B.C. (as per Kalhana)or 3101 B.C. (as per the deduced chronology)

Now, let us see what the latest archeological research has to say about the Neolithic and early Harappan culture and the Greater Indus System which spread from Iranian plateau, Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Sind, Persian Gulf, North-West India, East and West Punjab, Kashmir and Hindu Kush etc. from 7th Millennium to 2nd Millennium B.C.

F. R. Allchin, in *Antecedents of the Indus Civilization*, states that the whole

of the Indus Valley or the Greater Indus System should be viewed as a single cultural region having an unbroken line of development which ran from the breeding phase into Mature Harappan [mentioned in (iv) below]. He has shown the stages of settlement in the Greater Indus System as follows:

i. Neolithic Stage: (7th millennium B.C. to 3500 B.C.) comprising *Pre-ceramic Mehrgarh* (in North Baluchistan), *Ceramic Mehrgarh, Kille Gul Mohamad* (north-west of Mehrgarh) and *Final Mehrgarh* (at Mundigak in Afghanistan). [Stage I]

ii. Chalcolithic Stage: (3500 B.C. to 3000 B.C.) Amri (Lower Indus), Gumla (North-West Punjab), Sarai Khola near Islamabad and Burzahom in Kashmir. [Stage II]

iii. Early Harappan: (3000 to 2500 B.C.) Kotdigi (lower Indus), Kalibangan (Harayana, India), Amri, Sarai Khola. [Stage III]

iv. Mature Harappan: (2500 to 1750 B.C.) Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa etc. [Stage IV]

Allchin further mentions, "I must not neglect to mention one further excavation that is proving to be by far the most important discovery of recent years in the sub-continent. At Mehrgarh, near the point at which the Bolan Pass and river emerge on to the Kacchi Plain below Quetta, the French Archeological Mission to Pakistan has been since 1974-75 uncovering stage after stage of what appears to have been a continuous occupation spread thinly over an area of approximately 300 hectors, the latest dating from about the beginning of the Mature Harappan period and the oldest, as yet largely unpublished, being over 10 meters of occupation deposit terminating around 5000 B.C. (Calibrated Radio Carbon date) and going back from that date through many levels of pre-ceramic Neolithic occupation. (Jarrige and Le Chevallier, 1979)."

These findings would show that the Neolithic, Early Harappan and Mature Harappan stages engulfing a vast area covering: (i) the East- Iranian tableland, Baluchistan, Afghanistan - in the west and north-west of the Indus basin, (ii) north-west and north comprising Hindu Kush, Punjab, Kashmir and East-Punjab up to at least Kalibangan, represented the Greater Indus System from 7th Millennium to 2nd Millennium B.C. In view of this, the settlements in Kashmir would then be considered on the fringe of this system at Stage II (i. e. 3500 B.C. to 3000 B.C.) starting from Neolithic stage of development. This dating of Burzahom in Kashmir, indicating the existence of a human settlement prior to the period 3500 B.C., at once corroborates with the chronology according to Puranic, Vedic and traditional literature discussed here.

When we peruse *Nilmata Purana*, it appears that there were human habitations on the outskirts of the Satisar lake in Kashmir before its desiccation. These original inhabitants were the Naga and Pisacha aborigines as mentioned in Nilmat Purana: (Dr. Vedkumari in *Nilmata Purana*, Vol. 2)

Brhadasvah tam aha vasukim devo bhagavan bhayavihvalam
satidese tra punyode sarasy amlirasamnibhe
dharmisthaih sahito nagair vasavamitavikrama.
(verses 68-69)

[Brhadasvah, the venerable Deva said to Vasuki who was agitated with fear, "You along with the pious *Nagas* may live in the country of *Sati* in the lake of holy water, which is in the sky-like, O possessor of unparalleled strength"].

Thereafter, it further states:

Devarsinagamukhyesv adhisthitesv atha kasyapan
uvaca varadam visnum deso yam deva manusaih
vasatam ramaniyas ca punyas ca bhavita tatha.

Kasyape bruvati tu evam naga vacanam abruvan
na ivayam manusaih saroham vasamo munipum gava.
Tan uvaca tatah kruddah kasyapa vai Rajapatih
mama vakyam anadrtya yasmad dastum prabhasatha
tasmat pisacaih sahita vatsyadhvam natra samsayah.
(verses 205-208)

[When the chief of Devas, sages and Nagas had taken their seats, Kasyapa standing in front with folded hands said to Vishnu, giver of boons, `O God, let this country be inhabited by human beings and also be holy and charming. The Nagas uttered these words after Kashayapa had thus spoken: `We would not live in the company of men, O best among the sages'. Then Prajapati Kashyapa certainly became angry and said to them, `As you speak audaciously, without paying regard to my words, so you shall have to dwell in the company of the Pisachas, and of that, there is no doubt.']

Archeological findings at Burzahom in the Kashmir valley have revealed by radio-carbon dating the existence of a Neolithic settlement dating to 2255 +/- 115 B.C. at the depth of 2 meters *World Pre-history in New Perspective*, by Grahame Clark-1976.)

Prior to the above mentioned radio-carbon dating, Stuart Piggot, in his work titled *Pre-historic India to 1000 B.C.* (1962), had this to say with regard to Burzahom excavations:

"But whatever the date of layer B, it is obviously highly dangerous to regard the 9 ft. of loess as implying such a passage of time that the Neolithic material at its base would be of an an tiquity 'far beyond', the earliest Mesopotamian agricultural cultures of the 5th or 6th millennium B.C. as has been done by the excavators. There is really no valid reason for regarding Kashmir Neolithic culture as of any proven antiquity beyond perhaps first millennium B.C., followed locally by a relatively rapid accumulation of wind deposited soil."

The above statement is not only conjectural but also reveals that there are many scholars and archeologists who refuse to admit discoveries which upset established theories. It is not clear as to what Mr. Piggot meant by "highly dangerous", in his above mentioned statement. What is so dangerous about a finding ? Does it mean that if there are discoveries which upset the apple-cart of established Mesopotamian antiquity, it will be dangerous to accept such a premise? One wonders to whom it would be dangerous? It will be seen that Mr. Piggot has tried to play safe by inserting a word like 'perhaps'.

However, the above observation by Piggot has now been superseded by the latest Radio-carbon dating. F.R.Allchin has referred to Burzahom Neolithic and Chalcolithic culture by dating the findings to the period 3500-3000 B.C.

Chronology of Desiccation

The habitation of the aborigines (Nagas) in and around the higher reaches of the Valley appears to be of an antiquity even earlier than 3500 B.C. Thus, the desiccation of Satisar must have taken place sometime before 3500 B.C. Although there is no direct indication which would pinpoint the dessication of Satisar before 3500 B.C., we may be able to obtain some clues from the contemporaneous happenings in the west and south-west of Kashmir and in the Indus Basin during this time frame.

As already discussed earlier, the dessication of the Satisar lake could not have occurred after 3500 B.C. because we observe a Neolithic settlement in the Valley after 3500 B.C. which was followed by an advanced and organized social order and ruling dynasty after 3450 B.C. So, broadly speaking, the desiccation must have occurred before 3500 B.C., i.e. somewhere between 6^{th} and 4^{th} millennium B.C. In order to arrive at a reasonably narrower time-frame as to when

the desiccation could have occurred, we will try to find some clues elsewhere which may be having some relationship with the occurrence of the draining of the huge mass of the lake-water before 3500 B.C.

There is an overwhelming archeological opinion that the main cause of the culmination of the Indus Valley Civilization, of which Mohenjo-Daro was the capital, was due to the massive flooding in the Indus Valley. But this is supposed to have occurred somewhere in 2000 B.C. It is also hypothesized by some archeologists that this massive flooding was not due to any natural cause but due to intentional punitive action by the so called Aryan invaders against the non-Aryan inhabitants of the Indus Valley such as the *Asuras, Rakshasas, Yakshas, Gandharvas* and *Pisachas*. The whole theory of the punitive action by the invading Aryan is based on the premise that the Rigvedic Aryans were posterior to Harappan culture.

As the latest theory propounded by some scholars and historians has shown that the Rigvedic Aryans were much anterior to the Harappans (discussed hereinbefore) and not posterior to them, the theory of the sudden culmination of the Harappan culture due to the invading Aryans naturally falls through.

K.D. Sethna, in *Karpasa in Pre-historic India,* points out that as Rigveda was anterior to the other Vedas followed by *Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads* and *Sutras*. The period of the Sutras would begin somewhere in the early period of the Harappan culture i.e. between 2500 and 2000 B.C. Thus commencement of the *Rigvedic* compositions would go back to at least 3500 B.C.

According to the latest archeological research carried out by Jarrige and others including F. R. Allchin, in his book, *Antecedents of the Indus Civilization*, it is apparent that the Stage I chronology covering the period 7th millennium to 3500 B.C. corresponds to the time-frame of the Neolithic settlement in and around Baluchistan. This period

is considered to be formative stage of Early Harappan civilization. Allchin remarks: "The third period (of the Mehrgarh periods), which may be regarded either as final Neolithic or as the beginning of the Chalcolithic, witnesses a great expansion of production and quantity of painted pottery which now becomes a special feature of the crafts of this region. The excavator has proposed for this period a date in the first half of 4^{th} millennium and it seems altogether acceptable."

For the first of these three Mehrgarh periods (i.e. Stage I) we know only one comparable site, i.e. *Kile Ghul Muhammad* in the Quetta Valley (Fairservis, 1956). For the second and third we also find comparable materials at Mundigak (Casal, 1961) and in the surface collections more widely found in Baluchistan. However, what is most surprising is that there is, as yet, neither any evidence for settlements corresponding to any of these three Mehrgarh periods in the Indus Valley itself nor do we know of any Mesolithic sites found there which, by Radio Carbon Dating, relates to any of these three periods.

The absence of such evidence is probably to be explained by the fact that the Indus plains have continued to build up with the annual inundations and thus have buried sites of all such periods, except in exceptional circumstances.

This implies that the third period of Neolithic Stage (i.e. the first half of the 4^{th} millennium B.C.), representing the formative stage of Early Harappan sites in the Indus Plains, is probably buried under the alluvium deposits due to heavy floods.

In this connection K.D. Sethna in *Karpasa in Pre-historic India* says, "We need not think of Manu as a reflection of Zinsudra. Mesopotamia itself had more than one flood in the centuries before early dynastic times. So Manu could be an independent figure; the hero of the ancient flood in the north-western India or thereabout to which the earlier Atharvaveda seems to allude."

The conclusion one can draw is that there would have been Neolithic or early Chalcolithic agricultural settlements in penultimate stage of urban civilization in the Indus Valley (as a prelude to Early Harappan civilization) somewhere between 4000 - 3500 B.C., which, due to devastating floods (deluge) in the north-west India and Indus Valley (to which the Brahmanas and early Atharvaveda alludes to), got obliterated. The later Early Harappan and Mature Harappan civilization and the great city of Mohenjo-Daro and other riverine urban settlements developed only after the deluge till their eventual culmination during the period 2000 to 1750 B.C. These urban settlements could have been abandoned due to regular flooding and due to the fear of the repetition of these inundations which appear to have occurred repeatedly.

The interpretation of the Rigvedic reference to the removing of obstacles by Indra from the naturalization dam in the high mountains would obviously pertain to the period 4000-3500 B.C. i.e. prior to the Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements (before Early Harappan culture) on the banks of the Indus and not to the period beginning the 2nd millennium B.C. (which is supposed to be the end of the Mature Harappan civilization).

What is most important in context to the subject under discussion relates to the mention in the Rigveda of Indra's exploit of the elimination of the *Asuras* (here it would mean the Harappans) by removing obstacles from the water reservoirs in the mountainous regions and flooding their settlements after killing Vrita, has a strange resemblance to the Nilmata Puranic episode pertaining to the desiccation of the Satisar lake. Nilmata says that Indra had a terrible fight with a Daitya Chief, Sangraha, who was supposed to be invincible on the banks of the Satisar lake and ultimately Indra was able to kill Sangraha. Later Sangraha's son Jalodbhava created havoc on the outskirts of Kashmir by killing people. Kashyapa was approached by the King Nila Naga

for eliminating this menace. Then Narayan, Shiva and Brahma asked Ananta, the plough holder, to break forth the mountain for draining of the lake before Jalodbhava could be destroyed. This was accomplished and Jalodbhava was killed after the said desiccation.

This mythological event appears to synchronize with the breaking-forth of the water dam by Indra which resulted in the killing of Vrita as mentioned in the Rigveda. These two versions may be actually pointing to the same episode.

In both of these versions two things are common; first, the ultimate aim was to destroy *Daityas/Asuras* (who could be the Harappans) and second, the instrument used for achieving this aim was the disastrous breaking-forth of the mountain dam holding a huge mass of water in a mountainous region.

So, the inundation of the Indus Valley settlements existing prior to those of the Early Harappans could be due to the occurrence of the great flood during the first half of the 4th millennium B.C. (which could be the result of the event of the breaking of the water reservoir as mentioned in the Rigveda and the Nilmata). This clearly indicates that there was some cataclysmic tectonic or seismic upheaval in the higher reaches of the Indus which could have caused a rupture in the fringe of the mountains in the embankment of the ancient Satisar lake, near Baramulla which appears to have occurred between 4000-3500 B.C. as already mentioned above. Thus, it is highly probable, that the great flood in the north-west and Indus Valley was due to the draining of this huge mass of water which would have caused unprecedented floods in Jhelum, Indus and its other tributaries. This is probably the reason why the Stage I settlements in the Indus Valley, not being traceable, are conspicuous by their absence.

The reference in the traditional literature, as mentioned earlier, reinforced by the latest archeological findings pointing to the

occurence of a great flood in the north-west of India and the Indus Basin somewhere in the first half of the 4th Millennium B.C., furnishes us a clue about the probable period of dessication of the *Satisar* lake as having occurred between 4000 to 3500 B.C. implying that its eventual reclamation would have followed by settlement of an organized community in the Valley after 3500 B.C. (i.e. Stage II of the Indus Valley).

This chronological scheme and other relevant events could be treated as a basis for our probe into the ethnology and cultural background of Kashmiris in general.

It has already been discussed that only the chronology based on the Nilmata Puranic, Vedic, astrological and latest archeological findings can lead us to a probable and a comprehensive scenario about the pre-history of Kashmir and the cultural and ethnic background of its inhabitants. The chronology thus appears to emerge as under :

i. Kashayapa Period - 6561 B.C.

ii. Vaivasvata Period - 6525 B.C.

iii. Neolithic settlement of aborigines Nagas in the higher reaches in the outskirts of the valley of Kashmir before the dessication of the Satisar lake
(Before the 4th millennium B.C.)

iv. Dessication of the Satisar lake

(causing great flood in the north-west India and Indus between 4000 - 3500 B.C.)

v. Reclamation of land in the Valley after dessication; Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements of aborigines, Indo-Aryans/ Indo-Iranians, Nagas, Pisachas and other immigrants.
(After 3500 B.C.)

vi. Ruling dynasty starts: 3450 B.C.

vii. Birth of Lord Krishna.
(3227 B.C.)

viii. Gonanda - I. (18th king of the Gonanda dynasty).
3180 B.C.

ix. Mahabharata War.
[3138 B.C. or 2449 B.C. (as per Kalhana)]

x. Start of Kaliyuga era.
(3102 B.C.)

xi. Saptarishi or Laukaki or Kashmirabda era
(3076 B.C.)

Anteriority of Indo Aryans

Generally, it is held by many of the historians and archeologists that the Indo-Aryan entry into north-west India and Indus Valley and west Punjab occurred sometimes between 2000 to 1000 B.C. whereupon they encountered the flourishing Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan Civilization (corresponding to the period 2500-1750 B.C.). This naturally shows the anteriority of the Harappans to the Indo-Aryans. But, by these conclusions, many questions arise which have not been satisfactorily answered. These are :-

i. The traditional literature in India does not corroborate with this chronology. The Kaliyuga period starts from 3102 B.C. as per astrological calculations and the relevant data in the traditional literature. Also, an event like Mahabharata war appears to have been fought either just before Kali era. This shows that the Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians must have already settled in and around

Kurukshetra area of East Punjab and Haryana much earlier than the 3102 B.C.

ii. Similarly the Saptarishi or Laukakshi era of the Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir, which is still in vogue, also starts from 3076 B.C. This is in direct conflict with the generally held view of some of the historians and archeologists that Indo-Aryan/Indo-Iranian influx into north-west India started after 2000 B.C. or so.

Hence, according to the traditional Indian literature, the Harappan culture appears to have been posterior rather than anterior to the Rigvedic Aryans (Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians). It may be mentioned here that even as per Kalhan Pandit's chronology (given in *Rajtarangini*) holding the view that the Mahabharata war was fought 653 years after the beginning of the Kaliyuga era i.e. 2449 B.C., it would mean that the Mahabharata war was contemporaneous to the beginning of the Harappans in the Indus Valley and that the Indo-Aryan settlements were prior to Mahabharata in the Kurukshetra area, which, ipso facto, indicates that the Indo-Aryans would be anterior to the Harappans.

The discovery of cotton seeds at Mehargarh (Bolan Pass, Baluchistan in Pakistan) belongs to the period 5th millennium B.C. It will be seen that there is no mention of cotton in the Rigveda. However, as opposed to this, the Harappans, in fact did use cotton. How is it that if the Rigvedics supposedly succeeded the Harappans around 2000-1000 B.C., they did not know anything about cotton. This has led many scholars like K.D. Sethna to the conclusion that the Rigvedics were anterior to the Harappans and that the ancestors of the Rigvedics were settled much before 5th millennium B.C. in the locale of north-west India and Indus Basin. The mention of cotton occurs later in the Sutra period which becomes contemporaneous to the Harappans period.

Further, the mentions of the great deluge not being in the Rigveda but in the Attharvaveda could mean that the great flood must have occurred after 4500 B.C.

What was the cause of the "Great deluge"? Could it be due to the draining of the huge mass of waters of the Satisar lake in Kashmir occasioned by some tectonic activity in the Himalaya region that could have occurred sometime before 3500 B.C.? This is obvious because the findings in Burzahom reveal that the Neolithic settlements in the Valley were not earlier than 3500 B.C.

The Early Settlers of the Valley

Now the question arises as to who were these early settlers in the Valley? Were they Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians or some other tribes? There is no definitive evidence available which could provide any information as to their racial identity. However, in the higher reaches of the Valley, before desiccation of the Satisar lake, archeological evidence shows the presence of some Neolithic settlements, which is also corroborated by the Nilmata Purana. The Nilmata mentions that the original inhabitants of the Valley were Nagas and Pisachas. They appear to be the aborigines of the Valley who were living in the higher reaches and the surrounding areas. Different ethnologists and archeologists have given different opinions about the lineage of the Nagas and their ethnic identity. But generally, it is believed that the Nagas were probably from some non-Aryan stock who were later *Aryanised.* C. V. Vaidya in his *History of Sanskrit Literature* says that the *Nagas,* whose emblem was 'serpent-like', were aborigines who used to attack Aryans very often, but later the Nagas appear to have become less hostile and even became friendly with Aryan people which eventually lead to marital relations between them.

According to some modern scholars and archeologists (K.D. Sethna and others), Kashmir was probably within the early Rigvedic fold, and, it had its sway into north-west of India, northern region of Afghanistan, Indus basin, part of Baluchistan and Iran which, in its turn, had links with so called Indo-Europeans and inhabitants of Ukraine somewhere in 4th millennium B.C. The settlements in the north and north-western and Indus regions were of Neolithic Stage and according to A.R. Allchin and others these could be placed within the influence of the Greater Indus System (Stage II) of the Indus Valley as the antecedents of the Naga and Pisacha aborigines before and after the dessication of the Valley. The regular settlements of the other tribes including the Indo-Aryan in the Valley, after the dessication, could be placed somewhere after 3500 B.C. This suggested chronology is supported by the archeological findings in Burzahom in Kashmir and their relationship with the Neolithic settlements of the Greater Indus System as discussed earlier. Moreover the observance of Laukakshi (Saptarishi) calender, still in vogue in Kashmir, clearly signifies that the advent of Indo-Aryans/Indo-Iranians, (perhaps of Rigvedic culture and other tribes) into the Valley could not be later than 3076 B.C.

A. L. Basham in his book *The Wonder that was India* says:

"The Aryan invasion of India was not a single concerted action, but one covering centuries and involving many tribes, perhaps not all of the same race and language. It seems certain that many of the old village cultures of the western hills were destroyed before the cities of the Indus vanished, but otherwise the course of Aryan expansion cannot be plotted owing to the paucity of material remains. Evidently, the invaders did not take to living in the cities and after the fall of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, Punjab and Sindh became the land of little villages, with buildings of wood and reed, the remains of which have long since perished. For centuries, after the fall of Harappa, this

part of India is almost an archeological blank, which at present can only be filled with literary sources."

Thus, the colonization of Kashmir by the early Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians would have taken place in successive waves.

The Indo-Aryan branch, whether they were autochthon (original inhabitants) of north-west India and Himalayan uplands or had entered into this region via Kabul valley and Khyber, would have most probably taken the route of Taxilla, Hazara and then along the Jhelum water-shed into the Baramulla gorge. The influx into the Valley could have also been from its south-western passes. However, considering the geographical and topographical conditions, the infux into the Valley would most probably have been from the western or north-western passes. The reasons for this are two-fold:

Firstly, the mountainous passes in the south and south-west are through Pir-Panjal range skirting the south and south-west side of the Valley which touch the altitudes of over 10,000 ft. ASL. These passes are covered with perennial snows during most part of the year except for two or three months in summer. The only all-weather route passable throughout the year is through the Baramulla gorge, which in ancient times led towards Hazara, Chitral, Taxilla and other areas of north-west frontier of India. In remote antiquity, the passes over the Pir-Panjal would have been almost impassable. So, any influx into the Valley would have been easier from the direction of the west towards Hazara and Taxilla along the Vitasta water-shed. The other comparatively more difficult route would have been from accross the Pamirs to Hindu Kush, then to Chitral, Gilgit and Chilas and thereafter through the northern passes by crossing the water-shed of the Krishnaganga. Therefore, the major inflow could be through the northern passes in summer, bringing these tribes from Pamirs, Chitral, Gilgit and Chilas into the Valley.

Secondly, the study of the historical geography in this region indicates that the migrations and settlements of the colonies of various tribes in the remote antiquity have been from the extremely cold to moderate cold regions and from moderate cold areas to temperate and then to warmer regions and not in the reverse order.

Therefore, it would have been but natural for these Aryan and other tribes to migrate from extremely cold regions, such as Hindu Kush and Pamirs, towards moderately cold regions, such as Chitral and Gilgit and thence to moderately cold temperate zones such as that of the Kashmir valley and not the other way round. Similarly, migrations from North-West Frontier area and Taxilla to more invigorating climate of the Valley, being quite near the Jhelum water-shed and an easier route along the Valley, would have been a logical possibility. The tribes who settled down on the banks of the Indus in the South Indus basin or from the areas of Kurukshetra, Sutlej and Yamuna, including the so called Saraswati river areas, together known as Brahmavarta, having temperate to moderately hot climate, would hardly have liked to migrate en masse to a colder region like Kashmir and that too after crossing high mountainous snow-bound passes. Hence, no major migrations, en masse, would have been possible in those remote times from the regions of Brahmavarta to Kashmir.

So, whatever colonization took place in early stages in the Kashmir valley, it must have been carried out from the areas which are today referred to as the North-West Frontier Province, Taxilla, Pamirs, Chitral and Gilgit (located presently in Pakistan) at the hands of the Indo-Aryan, Indo-Iranian and other tribes who appear to have entered the Valley in the early stages.

A comprehensive picture of what transpired can be put as follows:

i. Antecedents of Rigvedic Indo-Aryans, Indo-Iranians and other tribes settled in the Indus Basin, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, part

of Iran, north-west of India, (as south-eastern wing of the Great Aryan belt) and Highlands of Kokand and Badakshan while as the Indo-European branch of the Aryans had settled in the region of Oxus & Jakartes, Armenia, Asia Minor and Ukraine in the 5th and 4th millennium B.C.

ii. The early Rigvedics were anterior to Harappans in the locale of the Indus Basin (since 5th millennium B.C.).

iii. Nagas and Pisachas were among the Neolithic settlers in the higher reaches of Kashmir valley (5th millennium B.C.).

iv. Desiccation of Satisar lake occurred somewhere before 3500 B.C.

v. Migrations of Rigvedics to East Punjab and Kurukshetra area occurred between 3500 - 3000 B.C.

vi. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan culture thrived during 2500 to 1750 B.C. (Stage IV)

vii. Settlement of Indo-Aryan, Indo-Iranian and other tribes in the Kashmir valley took place thereafter. According to George Grierson and others beginning from 4th. Millennium B.C. the ingress of Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians into Kashmir took place from the region of Kokand and Badakshan via Pamirs and Merv and Eastern Persia through Laghman, Kafirstan, Chitral and Gilghit. It would appear that the early settlers in the Valley, who penetrated from the west and north-west through Chitral, Gilgit and Taxilla-Jhelum water-shed, were of mixed tribes of Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian speaking people. There was also some migration of Indo-Aryans from the North-West Frontier and Punjab to Kashmir. These would include the remote ancestors of Kashmiris, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits.

The question arises, where did these remote ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits actually come from? Dr. Henny Sender in her study, *Kashmiri*

Pandits referring to M.A. Sherring and Cole Brook and Hargopal Kaul, has this to say:

"There is some debate concerning the direction from which the Kashmiris came to Kashmir. Colebrook stated that they were descendents of incoming Kanya Kubja Brahmins. Sherring dismissed the theory of his Benarasi informants that they were related to the Kanoji Brahmins. Kaul stated flatly, as regards the origins of the Kashmiri Brahmins, it is certain that it was a colony of Aryan Immigrants from Central Asia."

Early Settlements, Culture & Language

The valley of Kashmir has been a cradle of ancient civilization which developed a distinct culture. While examining the roots of its ethnic, linguistic and cultural fabric, an exploration of the scenario in the northern and north-western region of the Indian sub-continent based on its pre-historical, proto-historical and historic periods is entailed.

The cultural mosaic of the pre-historic period of Kashmir is mostly shrouded in mystery as very little is known by way of written records and archeological remains etc. However, here we are attempting to unravel certain important facts by, on the one hand, probing into traditional literatures and, on the other, by examining the archeological, linguistic and ethnic data, to the extent available. The diversity of views about these ancient people, their culture, language and the chronology of events, raise some pertinent questions, which, rather deepen the enigma.

The early settlement of tribes in the valley of Kashmir is directly related to the existence of various cultural pockets in the immediate neighbourhood of Kashmir between say 600 B.C. to 3500 B.C.

Who were these early settlers? Although no definite conclusions can be formulated, nevertheless, there are very strong pointers which indicate that these settlers were mostly Aryan speaking people known as Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians in addition to some other tribes.

What was the cultural background of these tribes? Were they partly of early Rigvedic culture or of a mixed culture of Rigvedic and Non-Aryan stock? Although nothing definite could be said about the denomination of cultures of these tribes, but by probing into the ethnic and linguistic background of the Indo-Aryan, Indo-Iranian and non-Aryan tribes settled in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan, Persia, Baluchistan, Indus basin and Northern Frontier in the 4^{th} or 3^{rd} millennium B.C., it would appear that these tribes, though within the Aryan fold, were having non-Aryan elements. This was probably due to the influences of the formative stage of early Indus Valley Civilization in the Greater Indus System, the boundaries of which in the north touched the North-West Frontier Province and northern Baluchistan. (Alchin and others)

Linguistically, these tribes were mostly of Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian base, but a spill of local dialects of *Shina* known as *Pisacha* language, spoken in Hindu Kush, could also be expected. In this connection George Grierson, in *Ethnology, Languages, Literature and Religions of India* says:

"The spill of an Iranian language over the great watershed of the Hindu-Kush is but a repetition of what occurred centuries ago when the Aryans first settled in the Pamirs. At that early time, if linguistic evidence may be accepted, some of these Aryans crossed the passes and settled in what is now Laghman, Kafirstan, Chitral, Gilgit and Kashmir. They migrated at a period when all the typical characteristics of Iranian languages had not yet become fixed and in their new home, their tongue developed on its own lines, partly Iranian and partly Indo-Aryan."

According to Dr. Hoernle's theory of immigration of Indo-Aryan vernaculars into the Indian Sub-continent in successive waves these languagcs comprise three main aspects:

A. Language of the Midland.
B. Intermediate languages.
C. Languages of the Outer Band.

The north-western linguistic group belongs to Outer Band languages which comprise Kashmiri, Kohistani, Lahnda and Sindhi. According to this theory the languauges of earlier immigrations belong to the Outer Bands, which was followed by another swarm of immigrants belonging to the Midland and Intermediate language groups.

George Grierson further explains Dr. Hoernle's theory as under :

"This theory supposes that after the first swarm of Indo-Aryans had occupied the Punjab, a second wave of Aryan-speaking people, the remote ancestors of the Aryo-Dravidians of today, impelled by some ethnic upheaval or driven forward by the change of climate in Central Asia, made their way into India through Gilgit and Chitral and established themselves in the plains of the Ganges and Jamuna, the sacred middle land (*Madhyadesa*) of post-Vedic tradition."

It will be seen, as per Hoernle's theory, the first swarm of Indo-Aryans occupied the outer band and the second wave occupied the intermediate group areas. The outer band, as such, occupied Kashmir, Kohistan, Hindu-Kush, Sindh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Assam and the Intermediate language groups occupied Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab much after the first incursion. Further George Grierson says :

"Turning to the outer band, an unnamed apabhramsha was the parent of *Lahnda* and *Kashmiri*, the latter, as has been said, had as its base some Pisacha language akin to Shina, over the modern language lies

as a second layer." Sindhi is derived from a Vrachada apabhramsha spoken in the country of the Lower Indus, and Marathi is the child of the apabhramsha of Maharashtra.

It has been mentioned earlier that the original inhabitants of the Kashmir valley were Nagas, Pisacha and Yakshas. These tribes were probably speaking the Pisachas language akin to Shina owing to the proximity of the Hindu Kush and Pamirs. The influx of Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranian in the valley of Kashmir later brought the Pisacha based apabhramsha which became the basis of Kashmiri dialect.

Quoting J.H. Hutton in *Races & Cultures of India,* D. N. Majumdar says :

"The brachycephalic (broad and short-headed) elements in the Indian population is derived from an earlier immigration of the Armenoid branch of the Alpine race which developed a high standard of civilization by the end of the 4^{th} millennium B.C. They probably spoke the Dravidian language and had much in common with the pre-historic peoples of Mesopotamia. This civilization was flooded in the west during the 3^{rd} millennium B.C. by the immigration from the Iranian plateau and the Pamirs, of a brachycephalic race speaking perhaps an Indo-European language of the Pisachas or Dardic family. From the east there was a wide spread movement of the southern mongoloids southwards to the Bay of Bengal and into Indonesia which had some reflex influence on India from the east. Finally, the dolichocephalic Indo-Aryan race entered the area comprising the present-day Punjab in about 1500 B.C."

It would appear that the first wave of immigration into Kashmir somewhere in the 4^{th} millennium B.C. (according to Dr. Hoernle's Theory) contained the strain of polyglot cultural base of Armenian and Mesopotamian civilization superimposed by Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European language of the Pisacha or Dardic family. The

second wave of immigration into the Valley appears to be of Indo-Aryan base.

However, there are scholars who do not entirely agree with George Grierson that Kashmiri language mostly belongs to Dardic group. These scholars assert that Shina and Sanskrit have similarity in meanings as well as in their phonetics. It would therefore appear that Kashmiri language, in its primitive form, was as old as Rigveda and very close to archaic Rigvedic Sanskrit with a strain of the Pisacha or the Dardic group. The Kashmiri of the classical Sanskrit period and of later periods of Prakrit and apabhramsha, however, slightly assumed a different form.

The first wave of immigration into the Valley could be the early Rigvedics (who were of a mixed Indo-Aryan and Indo-Iranian base) with the strains of non-Aryan elements followed by the second wave of those who were purely of Indo-Aryan origin corresponding to the period of the later Vedas, Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aryanikas, Upanishads and Sutras. During this period, the advancing Aryans spread to and colonised the area lying on the east, south and north of Brahmavarta (i.e. the areas occupied by the rivers Sutlej, Saraswati and Yamuna). By this time, the Rigvedics had shifted to the east of this region from their Indus basin colonies.

Pusalkar in his book, *Aryan Settlements in India & History and Culture of Indian People*, while talking on the subject of Aryan settlements, says:

"In the north and the north-west, we come across the Uttarakurus, Uttaramadras, Bahlikas, Mahavristas and Mujavants, showing expansion along Kashmir and the Himalayas".

If we peruse all what has been said above in respect of the probable area influenced by the early Rigvedic Aryans, there is an overwhelming evidence which definitely indicates that such settlements could have

taken place in the region comprising the Kashmir-Bactrian-Punjab or Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan-Uplands. There are number of scholars who are also of the opinion that Kashmir/Punjab area must have been the center of Rigvedic people. In his "History of Pre-historic India (Vol. I)", V. Rangacharya says:

"The probability of the Kashmir-Bactrian-Punjab hypothesis is, in my opinion, not less strong than that of the European. All the arguments of original temperate-zone-home of the Aryans can be applied to this area. Further, traditions refer to the trans-Himalayan source of the fire-cult. We may thus conclude that, about B.C. 3000, a section of the Mediterranean Dolichcephalic, who occupied the region of Bactria-Kashmir-Himalayan uplands, the lands where the archaic Vedic and Pisacha dialects were spoken, developed a sacrificial cult and, during the next millennium, gradually spread themselves across the western Asiatic Plateau, influenced the Babylonian and Egyptian civilizations, penetrated the European Plain through the Caspian Sea, Black Sea and Balkan regions and so laid the foundations of Aryan Europe. This change might well have taken place during the 3rd millennium. It can adequately explain how the most advanced of the Aryan tongues has existed in Sanskrit and how it has influenced the Asiatic and European cultures and languages. It can also sufficiently explain the remarkable perfection showed by Vedic language and literature. It should never be forgotten that such a well-developed language could not have been exotic. The Dasyus and Asuras mentioned in the Vedas may be the men of the Indus Civilization with whom the Aryans naturally came into hostile contact. The Mundas and other aboriginal peoples were probably the Nishadas, Dasyus, Rakshasas and Pisachas of Sanskrit Vedic Literature. The formation of Zend in Persia perhaps might have taken place slightly later than the Rigvedic age and subsequent to the Arayan expansion westward from the Kashmir region and the formation of an Aryan state in Persia or rather Iran."

Dr. S.S. Misra in his treatise, *The Aryan Problem- A linguistic approach,* observes, "The fresh linguistic and archaeological evidence not only proposes a very early date for Rigveda, but also puts a question mark on the generally accepted place for the original home of the Indo-European speaking people. Caspian Sea area is now more or less accepted as the original home. But the linguistic evidence seems to challenge it and India seems to be more favoured than before to be considered for being an original home of the Indo-European speech community, on the basis of the fresh linguistic and archaeological evidence."

He then conclusively opines, "At this stage it is perhaps necessary to examine why so much importance is to be attached to Sanskrit or Indo-Aryan. It seems from our studies in above pages that Rigveda is the oldest document in the Indo-European language family, going to a period beyond 5th millennium B.C. on linguistic grounds. Besides it also seems possible that India was the original home of Indo-Europeans and Aryans went outside India in several waves to form the various branches of the Indo-European language family."

On examining various theories about the original habitat of the so called Aryans or Aryan speaking people and their subsequent dispersal, Kashmir-Himalayan uplands, including north-western region and Bactria, appear to be the most likely colony of the Rigvedic Aryans in their earlier stages. Even B. G. Tilak's *Arctic Home* view does not vitiate the above 'Kashmir- Himalayan uplands' theory, because, according to him, the migration and subsequent settlement of the southern group of the Arctic Aryans (after their split near the Ural Mountains) towards the warmer Iran-Kashmir-Punjab region took place after 4000 B.C.

However, there are scholars who assert that the Indo-Aryans and Indo-Iranians must have migrated from the area north of the Black

Sea into the extensive European steppes. Benfey, in 1868, had supported this view on the basis that animals such as the bear, wolf, and certain trees like beech, birch and pine, with which the Aryans were acquainted, are all indigenous to temperate zone and, above all, to Europe, whereas the characteristic animals and trees of Southern Asia such as lion, tiger and the palm were known only to the Indians and the Iranians.

These arguments definitely do not carry much weight because animals, plants and trees peculiar to temperate zone, with which Arayans were acquainted, as mentioned above, are also indigenous to Kashmir-Himalayan uplands. Similarly, there are no palm trees, lions and camels in this part of the Indian sub-continent. In view of such and other factors already discussed in detail, it will not be wrong to maintain that the region comprising the Kashmir-Himalaya uplands was, in fact, the citadel of Rigvedic Aryans.

The early settlers in the Valley would, therefore, be a of polyglot culture with predominance of Rigvedic elements. The ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits or Bhattas who belonged to the early settlers would, therefore, belong to the above cultural category and, as such, have linguistically a Pisachi dialect-base with predominance of Sanskrit and Prakrit. Ethinically they would, therefore, appear to have a close linkage with the Indo-Iranian stock, while being imbued with an Indo-European strain.

The Original Inhabitants: Nagas, Pisachas & Yakshas

The identity of those original natives who settled in and around the Valley before its desiccation cannot be ascertained due to paucity of documentary records. Hence, the only source of information available is the traditional literature like Nilmat Purana and the Rajtarangini

which mention the presence of tribes such as the *Nagas, Pisachas* and *Yakshas* who inhabited the upper reaches of the Valley before its desiccation. However, among these, the Nagas appear to have been the most prominent in that they played an important role in the shaping of the social, religious and cultural history of ancient Kashmir.

The word Nag or Naga simply means a snake or rather a hooded snake. According to the Purana, the Nagas inhabited the length and breadth of the Valley. The literal meaning of the word *Naga* is a snake or a serpent, and it has been established by many scholars that the snake was in fact the totem of this tribe. It may not be out of place to mention here that in the ancient world this symbol was used by many cultures around the globe for depicting the serpentine evolution of an individual's consciousness (which is expressed in the tradition of yoga as Kundalini).

Theology and Origin of Nagas

(An exposition in terms of excerpts from the book, *The Return of the Serpents of Wisdom,* written by Mark Amaru Pinkham followed by the views of various scholars).

"In the Puranas (one of the sources of Hindu Mythology) it is mentioned that before the creation of the universe there was nothing but silence, a cosmic void; a kind of a potential state, where only infinite consciousness existed. Narayana, representing the sleeping or dormant male spark, latent within pure infinite consciousness, rested peacefully upon the back of *Shesha* (the seven-headed serpent) which drifted serenely like a raft in the placid waters of this ocean of infinite awareness."

"When the male spark became active it impregnated the essence of the goddess (the "waters") and what coalesced there-from got crystallized and, in turn, populated the physical universe which, in

Puranic mythology, is represented by a lotus flower arising from the navel of Narayana."



Narayan (as represented in Puranic mythology)

"At the primeval beginning, that is at the very dawn of time, all that existed was an infinite ocean of awareness; the androgynous, un-manifest spirit of God, which has been referred to as *Shiva* or *Brahman* among the Hindus, the *Tao* among the Chinese, *Ra* among the Egyptians and *Yod He Vau He* among the Hebrews. From out of this spiritual sea emerged the first form of spirit, a resplendent dragon, which was the first *Serpent of Wisdom*. Among the various branches of the *Serpent of Wisdom* around the globe this Primal Serpent has been called the *Goddess, Serpent on the Tree, Plumed Serpent, Azure Dragon, Shesha, Ammon Kematef, Kneph, Agathodeamon, Ea* or *Enki, Kon* or *Kan* and *The Son*. As the first tangible form assumed by the un-manifest spirit of God, the Primal Serpent was the vehicle of all God's powers, including the triune powers of creation, preservation and destruction. The Primal Serpent was created by waves of energy,

perturbations upon the cosmic sea of consciousness, which united to form a whirlpool. The cosmic whirlpool was the progeny of two opposing waves or currents; manifestations of the opposing male or female principles which united to produce the androgynous Primal Serpent upon impregnation of the female by the male. Mathematics, particularly that branch of it known as sacred geometry, recognizes the spiral (also conceived in the form of a Pyramid) to be the primary form of the whirlpool. The Primal Serpent is recognized by its seven aspects which, at the beginning of time, assisted in the creation of the cosmos and today rules over its seven principles and, in fact, manifests within the physical universe as seven colours, seven sounds etc. Among the diverse cultural iconographic representations of these seven aspects or creative principles of the Primal Serpent found all around the world, they are also represented as the seven heads of Shesha Naga in India or seven-headed Enki of Mesopotamia or sometimes denoted by its seven curves or coils. The stages leading to the awakening of the Kundalani are also seven. The dimensions encompassing the visible and the invisible worlds are also said to be seven. An interesting association between this and number seven can be found in the western system of numerology. Even the word "serpent" has seven letters."



(The union of male and female principles)

"At the level of the individual self, the Serpent became a symbol of the purpose or goal of human existence since such existence was said to have been lighted by its spark. Through arduous spiritual disciplines certain individuals had successfully united the male (*Shiva* or spirit or vertical or *Yin*) and female (*Shakti* or matter or horizontal or *Yang*)

principle (attributes/aspects) within themselves by having awakened or aroused this spark from its seat at the base of the spine (referred to as *Kundalini*). This was recognized as the inner transformative fire-which, when aroused, would kindle the consciousness of love within the hearts of such individuals. Such enlightened men and women had reached the goal of all spiritual paths so as to become androgynous *Serpents of Wisdom*. While existing within outward manifesting male or female gender specific forms, they were both male and female, spirit and matter, fully united in one body. In other words, the *I am* of the individual self would be fully united with the unlimited spiritual self or God and the affirmation of *I am that, I am everything*, and *I and my Father are one* would continually resound within their hearts. As fully conscious spirits inhabiting a physical form, *Serpents of Wisdom* wielded unlimited wisdom and their powers included the ability to materialize any physical object at will. They experienced the world primarily out of an immortal fourth dimensional *Dragon Body* (Spiritual body); a sheath which surrounds and interpenetrates the physical and the astral body. Contained within the Dragon Body are the supernatural senses of clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, omniscience and omnipresence, which allow the Serpents to remain in continual communication with the subtle realms that surround and interpenetrate the physical plane."

"Whenever and wherever they have manifested upon the earth, the *Serpents of Wisdom* have been worshipped as divine gods and goddesses and treated with utmost respect. They have served the various races around the earth as prophets, magicians, healers and the inverted ones who speak with the gods as their equals. Wherever they have appeared, the *Serpents of Wisdom* have been recognized by their emblems and symbols, which traditionally take the form of serpents and dragons. The snake alone is often used as their symbol because it is outwardly androgynous and its tendency to slough its skin and

be continuously reborn reflects the immortal nature of the *Serpents of Wisdom*. Furthermore, the undulating, spiraling shape of the snake reflects the spiraling life force or high frequency matter, which is produced when the pure vibrations of spirit are fully integrated into a dense material body; the achievement of an evolved spirit of wisdom."

Mythology and Legend of the Garden of Eden

While traversing the various cultural and spiritual traditions, the *Serpents of Wisdom* arrived from many corners of the cosmos in order to participate in the creation of what was destined to be a divine paradise on earth.

In order to achieve this goal the main emissary (also referred as the god in-charge of materialization), in unison with the principal/ fire deities and the subordinate/water deities, as per the Divine Mind's predetermined plan, used his creative powers, among other things, to crystallize the landscape of two vast land masses; the Gardens of Eden (referred to in Polynesian history as *Hiva*, the *Mother of all living*), which are supposed to be the cradles of two mother civilizations; one, *Lemuria* and the other, *Atlantis*.

Thus, these two huge land masses are referred to or remembered as the two dragon (a far-eastern synonym for the word *Serpent)* lands of ancient past (Dragon Lands). These Dragon Lands (the twin Continents i.e. Lemuria in the Pacific Ocean and Atlantis in the Atlantic Ocean) existed at the opposite end of the planet and were in fact polar opposites and are fondly remembered in the world mythologies as *Gardens of Eden*, *Cradles of Civilization* and *Motherlands.* Each of these Dragon Lands engendered a civilization consistent with the nature of the polarity it embodied.

The motherland of Lemuria (also known as 'Mu') reflected the positive polarity and the spiritual principle or the fire aspect and therefore

produced a spiritually motivated civilization (eastern civilization) dedicated to the development of certain divine qualities, such as love and acceptance, as well as to living a life which is in harmony with the earth.

By contrast, the motherland of Atlantis embodied the negative polarity and material principle or the water aspect and eventually spawned a materialistic civilization (western civilization) devoted to analytical reasoning, technological research and domination of planet earth or use of materials. Atlantis is remembered in ancient legends around the globe as a *Motherland*, a *Land of Immortals* and a *Garden of Eden.* Greek legends refer to it as *Hesparia*, *Poseid* or *Poseidon.* The culture of Atlantis went through two primary stages of growth. Initially this Dragon Land harbored a spiritually based civilization governed by extraterrestrial teachers and immortal *Serpents of Wisdom* which Edger Cayce (a clairvoyant, also called *The Sleeping Prophet*, who was able to traverse the ancient past in the course of which he, among other things, spoke of Atlantis and its times) referred to as the *Sons of the Law of One.* In the later stage he said that Atlantean culture deteriorated into self-aggrandizement, military control and a materialistic exaltation of the intellect and ego. The chief progenitors were a materialistic group which Cayce refers to as the *Sons of Belial.*

In the course of satellite mapping of the Atlantic Ocean floor a network of crisscross lines, 620 miles off the coast of north west Africa near the Canary Islands, has been located within the boundaries of a perfect rectangle (which is around the size of Wales). It was noticed in the process of an underwater exploration tool by an aeronautical engineer who claimed that it looked like an aerial map of a city. The underwater image can be found at the coordinates 31 15'15.53N 24 15'30.53W. Atlantis experts have said that the unexplained grid is located at one of the possible sites of the legendary island, which was described by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato. According

to his account, the city sank beneath the ocean after its residents made a failed effort to conquer Athens around 9000 B.C. The Greek Philosopher Plato wrote about Atlantis some 2600 years ago, describing it as "an island situated in front of the straits which are called by you as the *Pillars of Hercules*" (i.e the Straits of Gibralter).

The Kumaras

While tracing the antecedents of Lemuria (Mu), Pinkham writes:

"An important delegation of the androgynous Serpents on Mu were the Kumaras. They came as a *Brotherhood of Immortal Sons of God* with the mission of assisting in the spiritual awakening of their cousins on earth. The Hindu Puranas or legends remember the Kumaras as enunciate *Avatars* or saviors, who, as four eternally young twin-brothers, served as the first teachers of the *Siddha Marg*, the *Path of Perfected Ones*, which culminates in the union of the polarities and spiritual immortality. Their name, *Kumara*, reflects both their path to union as well as their inherent androgynous nature. The syllable *ma* represents the female principle of matter; the syllable *ra* is the identifying sound of the male principal of the spirit and *Ku* is the sound of their union as the androgynous *Serpents of Wisdom*. The syllable *Ku* combines the letter *K* with *Uu*, an archetypal symbol and sound denoting wisdom and the Creator's breath or life force. The arrival of Kumaras on Mu was pivotal to the evolution of the human species. They brought to earth the secrets which would assist in uniting the polarities within and lead to the full awakening of unconditional love within the heart-chakra, the ultimate goal of human existence. In Lemuria the Kumaras established a school for teaching their wisdom and spiritual disciplines. They were thus instrumental in producing many *Serpents of Wisdom*, some of whom later travelled from Mu to other parts of the world and founded their own mystery academics based upon the wisdom of the Kumaras. Some enlightened Kumaras

also served the people of Mu as their priest kings. One such master, Sanat Kumara, sat upon the dragon throne of Lemuria for many years. The culture which blossomed upon Lumaria became one of the most spiritually advanced cultures the world has ever seen. The Hindu records of India allude to the lost continent of Mu by the dual epithet of *Kumari Nadu*, a feminine name which suggests both *Motherland* and *Dragon Land of the Immortal Serpants*."

The Empire of the Sun

According to Colonel James Churchward, as per the records retrieved by him in India, the spiritual natives of Lemuria were sun worshippers and one of Pacific continent's epithets was *The Empire of the Sun*. It is stated that the definitive emblem of Mu was a version of the solar disc which represents not the physical sun but its essence, the transcendental spirit. The Lemurians were such spiritually elevated beings that many of them existed in high frequency physical forms or Dragon Bodies of pure life force. They were, therefore, acutely attuned to the subtle vibrations surrounding them. For this reason it was imperative for them to construct buildings and landscapes which generated vibratory fields which were soothing and spiritually uplifting. In order make their private and public enclosures spiritually uplifting, the Lemurians constructed them in the energy conducive shapes of pyramids, domes and spheres.

Is there any archaeological evidence of Lemuria? Richard Noone in *The Ultimate Disaster, 1982* (Three Rivers Press, New York, page 198) has written about the presence of ancient construction works on two Pacific islands; *Malden* in the Line Islands, and *Rarotonga* in the Cook Islands chain. The two islands lie close to (*Malden*) or just within *McNutt's* boundary for the South Pacific Superswell. Malden Island (4.00°S, 155.00°W) seems to contains the remains of a highway system (roads) that radiates outward from a temple complex composed of

tight-fitting basalt blocks, which cross beaches and then disappear into the water.

He adds that, "Fifteen hundred miles south of Malden Island, another section of the same type of road emerges from under the waves, crosses the beach, and disappears into the jungle of Rarotonga Island. This suggests that many Pacific Islands are the remains of a presently submerged Pacific continent."

Pinkham continuing on the subject further states:

"These *Serpents of Wisdom* moved into and settled in various parts of the world such as North Africa, Mediterranean, Egypt, China, Mesopotamia, Britain and India. The social, cultural, religious and racial spread-outs from these origins developed into a full spectrum of symbols which have surfaced around the globe as each divergent branch of the *Serpents of Wisdom*. Each of these branches adopted its own unique version of the androgynous as its definitive symbol; in Egypt, it was *Golden Asp*; in China, it was *Golden Dragon* (a genderless creature, the androgynous union of *Yin* and *Yang*, the original designations for the male and the female principles); in Mesoamerica, it was *Plumed* or *Feathered Serpent*; in India, it was the royal hooded cobra called *Shesha* and in Mesopotamia it was *Enki* (perched upon a cross), denoted by the two animals, goat and fish, in one body.

India or *Bharatvarsha,* meaning the *Land of Light*, being in close proximity to Lumaria and having been a part of the pan-Pacific land mass during its earliest period of existence, was an obvious destination for the migration of *Serpents of Wisdom* from Mu. Before the destruction of Lumaria, one wave of colonists who arrived into India from Mu were known as *Naacals* or *Naga Mayas*. Their story was found out by Churchward from some very ancient tablets on the basis of which he was able to find a secret vault of a Monastery at a place located in the northern part of India. His corroborative

research also included an in-depth study of Hindu legends, such as Ramayana. In the famous version of the text authored by the sage Valmiki, Churchward located a passage which specifically referred to the Naacals. The text maintained that the early Naga Mayas had anciently sailed to Burma and then to India from the land of their birth in the east. Then, the text states that the Naacals proceeded to Babylonia and Egypt and were instrumental in establishing mystery schools in those countries. Thus, the Indian sub-continent eventually engendered a prolific culture of Nagas or Serpents from the motherland of Mu. One of the Indian colonies founded by the Lemurians is referred to in the Ramayana and other semi-mythical texts as the Pandian kingdom which was contiguous to the southern most tip of Bharatvarsha and had once been part of Kumari Nadu or Mu. As an empire it flourished for thousands of years until, according to Tamil records, the greater part of it was swallowed up by a series of devastating floods. It is said that the greatest of *Serpents of Wisdom* of the Pandyan kingdom was Agastya Rishi, an immortal master of Yoga and a diminutive sage who stood less than five feet tall. He represented the immortal Kumaras, the first teachers of Yoga. During his tenure as a hierophant of the Pandyan kingdom, he founded the *Sangams* (literary academies) for the preservation of the ageless wisdom of the Kumaras. He is also said to have established the first Tamil grammar. When most of the Pandyan isthmus finally descended to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, Agastya took the ancient teachings of immortality and travelled to the northernmost part of the Pandyan kingdom, an area known historically as the Pandya kingdom of South India with its capital city of Madurai. According to a legend of his travels, he, at some point, journeyed north to Mount Kailash, the ancient abode of the Nagas in the Himalayas where he is reputed to have received the secrets of Yoga directly from Shiva, the Lord of the Nagas.

It is said that the Kumara serpents also arrived in China at the time preceding Mu's final destruction. They chose China and specifically Tibet as a new headquarter for the order of the serpents because of the safety afforded by its high mountains in view of the planetary upheavel they knew was imminent as well as because of this elevated land's inherent purity. That is perhaps the reason why they are said to have stored their ancient records and artifacts in the cavernous tunnels which ran under the present city of Lhasa. The records of their relocation, as per legends of some Tibetan monks, are said to be still preserved. Synchronous with this, the priest king of Lemuria, Sanat Kumara, is said to have permanently moved his administration to what is now known as Gobi Desert of China and Mangolia.

One of the legends states that the arrival of Nagas from Mu coincided with the creation of the Rama's empire. King Rama was the monarch of this empire which, from its capital cities of Ayodhya and Nagpur, the city of the Nagas, covered much of the Indian sub-continent. Rama, as an Avatar or pure incarnation of spirit, was part of the Solar Race or lineage (*Suryavanshis*) which supposedly had descended directly from the solar spirit. The emergence of this race appears to be the Vedic denomination of the Solar Brotherhood or Kumara lineage which had its earliest manifestation on Mu. Like Rama, the early Lemurian Kumars were Avatars who had descended directly from the solar spirit. Within the realm of Rama's Solar dynasty there were seven *Rishi* cities or sacred centers of learning which were governed by adept Nagas, the Indian *Serpents of Wisdom*. Many of these Rishi cities survived into the historical times and are today identified with some of the ancient cities of North India and the Indus Valley, an area which some archeologists are now claiming to have settled more than 12,000 years ago. D. H. Childress opines that the seven cities of Rama's empire were once attacked by the imperialistic Atlanteans with their sophisticated weaponry and the result can be found today

as rocks within certain Indus Valley cities have been found completely fused together, a phenomenon which can only occur under extreme heat, such as a nuclear blast. In the proximity of these rocks have also been found skeletons with as high a concentration of radioactivity as those which survived the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

Pinkham, thus says that the *Serpents of Wisdom* of India's Dragon culture were called *Nagas* and that their definitive symbol was the Royal Cobra, a version of the evolved, representing the spirit united with and accelerating the vibratory frequency of matter. With their timeless wisdom, the Nagas formulated many spiritual philosophies and practices. Nagpur, Kashi, Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro, Lothal, Takshasila (named after Takshak Naga and called as *Taxilla* by the Greeks), Magadha, Manipur, Mathura [ruled by Yadavas among whom Avatar Krishna (with the hard 'K' sound of the serpents) who was considered as one of the wisest Dragon kings of Bharatvarsha] and Kashmir, according to him, were among the cities/kingdoms founded by the Nagas of India.

He further points out that the waters of the Dragon kingdom of Kashmir were drained under the leadership of Nila Naga.

By the time the Fourth Buddhist Council was held in Srinagar (i.e. in about circa 100 A.D.), it is stated that about 84,000 Nagas were living in Kashmir. Therefore, is it suprising if there are places in Kashmir which have the suffix of 'nag' attached to them which, in fact, mean the dwelling places of the Nagas such as: Kounsernag, Verinag, Vecharnag, Sheshnag, Anantnag, Kokarnag, Nilanag and the like. Pinkham further states:

"Ruling over this proliferation of Nagas was a dynasty of Naga kings (Karkota Dynasty), the most famous from amongst them being the semi-mythical ruler, Naga Karkota, who is said to have had

renowned magical powers. One of the groups of Kashmirian Nagas colonized a region just below the Vindhaya mountains and therein established a lineage of Naga kings known as *Shatavahana Nagas* who, at that time, expanded their dominion over the areas which presently comprises the states of Maharashtra, Andhra and Karnataka within India. Prominent Nagas, other than those who were governmental administrators, assumed the role of spiritual teachers out of which some became the Mahanagas or *Great Nagas* or the *siddhas* the *perfected human beings*. While fully embracing the spiritual practices of their predecessors they had awakened the fiery Kundalini, the evolutionary force which normally lies dormant at the base of the spine and which can be moved through the seven *chakras* or power centers right up to the crown of the head to merge with Shiva, the transcendental spirit. The highest deity of all Nagas was Shiva. Pinkham opines that the figure of Shiva may have come from Atlantis or may have been influenced by Atlantean descendents who traveled to Bharatvarsha from their native Egypt and who could have evolved from the Atlantean fire serpent, Volcan. According to Greek historian Diodorus, the cult of Ptah-Osiris was taken to Bharatvarsha around 10,000 B.C., close to the time when Atlantis sank to the bottom of the Atlantic. When the cult of the Egyptian god reached India, the character of Ptah-Osiris may have influenced or been assimilated into that of god Shiva. The reason for this parallel is the fact that the nature and legends of Shiva and Ptah-Osiris reveal striking similarities. Both the gods were reputed to ride upon a bull and both had a female consort who manifested as a fiery serpents (Ptah-Osiris's consort was Sekhmet and Shiva's was Shakti). Both the gods were intimately associated with fire and destruction. The destructive aspect of Ptah-Osiris evolved into the volcano dwelling of Roman god, Vulcun, whose favourite weapon, like that of Shiva, was the trident. Like the other manifestations of God worshipped within the various dragon cultures around the globe, Shiva assumed two aspects,

one without form or formless (un-manifest or transcendental or not materialized and represented by a *Shiva Lingum*) and the other with form manifested or materialized and represented by an androgynous male figure with a snake coiled around his neck meditatively squatting on a tiger skin, possessed of matted locks, strands of rudraksha beads, a trident (symbolizing the three aspects or powers of the spirit) and a *damru* (a small hand-held drum), symbolized the sound vibration through which Shiva created the universe). The formless Shiva was synonymous with the transcendental (not materialized) male spirit and Shiva with form (materialized) was synonymous with Shakti, the female principle (the power of spirit emanating through vibrations which eventually contracted or condensed to become the material substratum of the physical universe). Within the psoriatic schools of the Mahanagas and Siddhas, the goal of existence was complete spiritual union with the transcendental aspect of Shiva via the assistance of manifest Shiva which is regarded as Shakti. This divine union was attained through the awakening of the Shakti (*Kundalani*) within the sacrum and her ascension up the *Yogic Tree of life*, the spine, to the abode of transcendental Shiva at the apex of the head. The practice of Yoga, meaning union, enabled unification of Shiva and Shakti, spirit and matter, as well as all other manifestations of the polarity as it exists within the human form, including the *Ida* and *Pingala* nadis, the male and female hormones and the left and right side of the body, respectively, which could be attained through practices such as yogic asanas (stretching postures), pranayama (breath control), meditation and the like. It is in this context that the Lord of Yoga, Shiva, came to have an androgynous representation. Sitting stoically immersed in a meditative trance symbolized Shiva's transcendental nature and, at the same time, using a tiger (the symbolic animal of the solar spirit) skin as his seat was indicative of the material aspect. Hence Shiva's abode is a the summit of yogic union that humans may aspire for."

The relevance of this discussion on Nagas is to give an exposition of the entire genesis of the term Nagas and what it stood for and also dispel the notion that they were some nondescript snake worshipping tribe. Since the antecedents of Nagas as a race or a culture or as the upholders of a special spiritual tradition are not historically very clear, it was, in context to tracing the cultural, religious and social propensities of the original inhabitants of the Valley, imperative to present the theory of the migration, origin, beliefs and practices of Nagas (as *Serpents of Wisdom*) the world over as propounded herein. The spiritual or religious aspects of the Nagas, as have been put forth above, become all the more engaging in reference to the unique Shiva-Shakti culture, philosophy and religion that evolved over the centuries in the Valley.

It will be interesting to note that Abhinavagupta, the great saint and scholar from Kashmir, was also known as *Abhinavaguptapada*. G.T. Deshpande in his book, *Abhinavagupta* says that the word 'pada' is used here to indicate honour. The word *Guptapada* means *Shesha* (serpent). Hence the term Abhinavaguptapada would mean *a new incarnation of Shesha*. Patanjali, the author of *Vyakarana Mahabhashya*, is also said to be an incarnation of Shesha.

Thus, it is also apparent that the Nagas of Kashmir, like those who dwelt in the northern and southern areas of India, were, in fact, among the aborigines of ancient India. Even in the line of the kings of Egypt, Iran and other regions, the local hieroglyphs (pre-historic picture writings) show the varied motifs of the snakes which is indicative of the existence of a strong Naga identity among them. Hence *Naga-Raja* actually denotes a king whose tribal totem was the snake.

Some scholars like Barth, Oldenburg, Vogel, Hendrik and others hold the view that these Nagas were mythical or demoniacal beings representing personified forces of nature. General Cunnningham and

C. S. Wake takes them to be snake-worshiping tribes. Colonel Tod, Pargiter and Banerji consider them to be an alien and hostile race. L. B. Kenny holds the view that the Nagas were a Dravidian people inhabiting the northern part of India before the influx of the Aryans. C. F. Oldham views them as a sun-worshipping Sanskrit speaking people whose totem was the *Nag* (The Hooded Serpent).

In his latest research work, *The Cross: a Hindu Symbol,* K. P. Chon explains, "When we read the ancient historical and religious texts, references of these totem symbols can be seen in all nations. But, the old books do not say that these totem names represented real men, perhaps because it was so obvious to them then, needing no interpretation in the era when these old texts were written on clay tablets, skins or on papyrus".

Some references in old Russian mention that Snakes destroyed and burnt the fabulous Babylonia (the present Iraq). Periplus, while recording the life of the people of Malabar coast, says:

"When the foreign ships arrive, there are serpents coming forth to meet you, black in colour, but shorter, with snakes on the heads and with blood-red eyes."

The greatest of emperors of pre-historic times, Azhisuva, had two snakes around his neck. Lord Shiva had the same; the great Yama and emperor Mahabali also had the same snake emblem around their necks. Some of these were not live snakes, but were, in fact, made with some material in the form of a snake as an ornament or as totem symbol.

In the Mahabharata, Kadru, Mother of Serpents, compelled Garuda (the Hawk) to take her sons across the sea "to a beautiful country in a distant region which was inhabited by Nagas" so as to save her children from death in the war. Raja Parikshit of Indraprastha abducted a daughter of Basak Nag. Consequently, the Naga army

invaded the realm of Raja Parikshit who was killed in the ensuing battle. When his son, Janmejaya, grew up, he having determined to exterminate the Nagas, is supposed to have performed a Yajna in which many Nagas were sacrificed by being thrown into the Yajna fire. Historically, this event simply means that many warriors of the Naga tribe were burnt alive.

Again in the Mahabharata, Lord Krishna points out to Arjuna that there were regions where great Naga kings like Arbuda, Chakravapin, Swastika, Mani Naga etc. reigned supreme in the olden days; which refers to a time far more ancient than that of Lord Krishna. Takshila, the great city of the Nagas, was founded by Taksha, the son of Bharata, a character from the epic Ramayana. Shesh Nag, and Basak Nag, among others, were worshipped as human idols representing kings.

A majority of scholars agree to the fact that the Nagas were among the aboriginal people occupying most of the north-western part of India in general and Kashmir in particular. As has been mentioned earlier in this treatise, in Kashmir the Nagas, Pisachas and Yakshas (perhaps of the Neolithic stage) must have occupied regions higher than 7000 ft. before the desiccation. The same tribes appear to have settled down in the reclaimed land of the Valley after the draining out of the Satisar lake. Considering the backdrop of Nagas, as mentioned earlier, it is not surprising to find that the Nilmat Purana indicates that the Nagas believed that nature was the repository and the symbol of the supreme intelligence of Godhead. However, God, being formless and yet portent with the power of procreation, was also represented in the form of a phallus. Thus, Shiva as the seed and Shakti as his manifest expression, became the twin facts of the *Shiv-Shakti* cult of Kashmir.

Nagas, as a tribe, were mostly pastoral in occupation and were not only the most prominent people amongst the aborigines in this area

but were, in fact, wide-spread and played a very important role in the future events which unfolded in the socio-religious and cultural mosaic of Kashmir, particularly, after its desiccation.

Pisachas, though shown in traditional literature as some mythical hob-goblins, appear to be a fierce tribal people living alongside the Nagas in Kashmir. They generally inhabited the areas covering Hindukush, the Indus basin, Bulochistan and the Himalayan up-lands since remote antiquity.

Yakshas, another aboriginal tribe, also appear to be the co-inhabitants of the Valley along with the Nagas and Pisachas during this period. In the early period, all the three tribes were essentially food-gatherers and hunters. Pisachas particularly caused trouble to Nagas, eventually leading to conflicts between them.

The reclamation of the desiccated land by these three tribes ensued long after the draining of the waters of Satisar lake. The Nagas were in complete control of the Valley and gradually developed a distinct culture, socio-religious ethos and language. Independent of the exposition given by Pinkham, it is generally believed that the Nagas practiced nature worship and had an iconic representation of the God-head in the form of the phallus which belonged to the primitive Shiv-Shakti cult symbolized by the totem of the snake.

It is not very clear as to what language the Nagas of Kashmir spoke in the early stages before the immigration of other tribes into the Valley. However, it is believed that due to their proximity to Chitral and Hindukush and their close contact with the Pisachas, (who had developed a *Pisachi* language), they would have probably been speaking the same dialect as that of the Pisachas.

That the Nagas were very powerful people in pre-historical and historical times, particularly in Kashmir, is demonstrated by the

treatise, Nilmata Purana which, in itself, is ample testimony to the fact that they were highly cultured and civilized. Dr. Ved Kumari suggests that they were originally non-Aryan, but, once they came in contact with the so called Aryan-speaking people, they also got Aryanised.

~ Chapter 4 ~

The Melting Pot

Naga-Aryan Convergence & Development of a Polygot Culture

The Valley has been a crucible of ancient civilizations. The story of the origin of the ancient people of Kashmir is engulfed in the mist of oblivion and obscurity out of which emerged a civilization that appears to have risen and flourished through a unique blending of diverse cultures.

According to Nilmat Purana, the Nagas were the progeny of Prajapati Kashypa who was ordered by Kashypa to settle down in Kashmir so that they could be safe from Garuda, their enemy. The mention in the Mahabharata of Takshak Naga's attack on Parikshit (of the Pandvas), Janamejaya's attack on Taksashila (abode of Takshak Naga, the present day Taxilla, in Pakistan) and the burning of Khandava forest by Arjuna are indicative of the hostilities between the Aryans and the aborginal Naga tribes. But, as the time passed, a gradual assimilation of their socio-religious and cultural traditions by the Aryans appears to have taken place and, at the same time, the Vedic influence on the tribal culture of the Nagas is also evident.

C. V. Vaidya in his *History of Sanskrit Literature* says:

"The Nagas had an emblem which looked like a serpent. They, in fact, were the aborigines of the Valley who used to attack the Aryans very often. Later, they appear to have become not only less hostile but also friendly with the Aryan people. This eventually led them to have marital relations with each other".

However, in the beginning, the native Naga and the other tribes did not allow the immigrants to settle down in the Valley on a permanent basis. The immigrants would enter the Valley in the spring and would be forced to leave after the harvesting season and before the onset of winter. Eventually, on the request of the immigrant Brahmins,

Nila, the then king of the Nagas, allowed them to settle down on a permanent basis provided the new immigrants followed their socio-religious traditions and practices.

The Nilmat Purana further informs us that Nila was the coronated as the king of the Nagas. He continued to rule *Satidesa* (Kashmir valley) even after its desiccation.

Kashmirangam jano nityam vasatam bhimavikrama
klisyate hi sada loko niskraman pravkan punah.
Grhaniha naras tyaktva purani vividhani ca
vasantu tvatprasadena varam etad vrtam maya nilah
evan astu dvijasreshta vasanti iha narahsada
palayantas tu madvakyam kesavad yan maya srutam.

[Let humans settle down permanently in Kashmir,
O, possessed of the fierce prowess. The people are always
facing misery in coming and going.
Leaving their homes in various places, the humans
are troubled. With their favour let them live
here. This is the boon I solicit.
Nila (said): "Let it be so, O best among the twice-born.
The humans may live here permanently, if you follow my instructions,
which I received from Keshava"].

It appears that the Nagas, though wary in the beginning, later showed resilience in their attitude which ultimately gave rise to this composite culture.

It is believed that long after the settlement of Naga and other aborigines of the Valley, the immigration of foreign tribes into the Valley began sometime after about 3500 B.C. It appears that most of the immigrants into this beautiful land, apart from a few Non-Aryan tribes, were mostly Aryan speaking people (Aryans).

There are many instances which show that Brahmins and Kshatriyas married Naga women not only during the time of Mahabharata but also thereafter. Even in the Mahabharata, there is reference to Arjuna marrying Ulupi and Citrangada, daughters of Nagaraja Kauravya and Citravahana, respectively. The Rajatarangini mentions that during the reign of King Nara, one young Brahmin named Vishakha fell in love with a beautiful Naga maiden Chandralekha, daughter of the then chief of the Nagas, and ultimately married her.

It may be mentioned here that King Jalauka (son of Ashoka) was very popular amongst the Nagas and, in fact, he is stated to have married a Naga maiden.

During the early Rigvedic period, caste considerations were not in vogue. Marriages took place between Brahmins and the Non-Aryan Nagas but alliances within the Brahminic group were always given a priority. However, marriages between the families having same *Gotra* and *Pravara* (both terms explained in Appendix 2) were strictly prohibited.

Nilmat Culture of Kashmir

Scholars, more or less, agree that the composition of the Nilmat Purana cannot be dated to before the 6^{th} century A.D. But, it may be kept in mind that though the date of its composition may be as late as the 6^{th} century A.D., its contents, nevertheless, refer to the pre-historic period. The information given in this Purana about the early period has been preserved down the ages by tradition and supported by other relevant Puranas. There is no reason not to rely on traditional literature for information. Kalhana refers copiously to Nilmat Purana in his Rajtarangini and, in fact, in very many ways, he confirms the authenticity of the contents of this Purana. Here we

are concerned with the contents and the overall impact of the various prevailing cults on the composite culture that emerged in Kashmir since antiquity.

The Naga culture, which was already thriving in Kashmir even before the aliens entered the Valley, being aborginal, had specific characteristics which were absent in the Vedic tradition. Over the passage of time, the confluence of the original inhabitants and the immigrant settlers appears to have evolved into an interesting mosiac of composite culture. In fact, the Nilmat Purana, by itself, is blended with Vedic practices. Even the Shiv-Shakti culture in its primitive form appears to have emerged through a process of gradual assimilation.

Society & Culture

The impingement of the Aryan tradition on this native culture resulted in making these people pastoral as well as agricultural in occupation. Similarly, the love of Aryans for music, dance and other arts had a salutary effect on the Naga ethos which was predisposed to readily imbibe such predilections. All the cultural activities of the Aryans in religious and social fields were also adopted by the Nagas. Reciprocally, the Naga cult had a profound influence on the Vedic way of life.

Though there is no indication that there was any class distinction in the early period of Rigveda, yet it appears that such a division in the tribal structure became discernible towards the end of the Rigvedic period. The basic unit in the society was the family, which was strongly patriarchal. The monogamous system was in vogue and marriages were indissoluble. In the lives of the early tribes, being both pastoral and agricultural, cattle played a very important part which, in fact, was used as currency in day to day transactions.

The foundation of the social structure in those early days was the family. All the members of the family lived in a common house under the strict discipline of the master of the house. Monogamy was practised generally. The status of women in the social order that emerged during early period of the settlement of the Aryan immigrants in the valley was quite high. This can be seen when, after the death of the King Damodara-I, Yasowati was crowned as the queen of Kashmir (3165 B.C.). The women's social pedestal was raised to that of goddess Parvati.

The early Aryans were a vibrant set of people without any taboos. They were lovers of music and played instrumental music. The major musical instruments were flute, harp, cymbals and drums. Music and dancing were very common.

These Rigvedic people preferred to live in villages and in the early stages they had not developed a life which, in the present sense of the term, could be called as urban. These were the days when the city civilization was not yet fully developed.

The people were both vegetarians and meat eaters. The grains used for food and for sacrifices were mostly barley (*yava*), rice and wheat.

The garments that the men and women wore were generally made of wool and deer skin. However, cotton was also used in later periods. The use of gold in ornaments was common.

Nagas contributed to the development of indigenous non-agricultural living or urban living. Although the immigrants in the Valley were mostly agriculturists, hunting was also resorted to by the ruling class.

Rigvedic immigrants into the Valley brought in a blend of Vedic and Non-vedic cultures which, perhaps, contained strains of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappan cultures.

According to Rajtarangini, there are many instances when the Nagas also took part in the governance of Kashmir. Durlabhvardhana, who was the son of Naga king, Karkota, took over as the king of Kashmir after the death of his father-in-law, King Baladitya established his rule. Thus, he founded the illustrious Karkota dynasty.

Naga Springs and Lakes

The names of various important springs and lakes in Kashmir are characterized by being the abodes of important Naga chieftains viz. Nila Naga, Mahapadma Naga, Anant Naga etc. (being the names of some of prominent sages/chieftains) which, as per the Nilmat, are about five hundred in number. The wide-spread presence of these spring abodes of Nagas throughout the length and breadth of the Kashmir valley, mostly as shrines, is indicative of their strong cultural impact on the Vedic Aryans from very early times.

Nagas under Buddhist Supremacy

During the rule of King Abhimanyu (immediately after Kushan Rule), Naga and Nilmat customs and practices got temporarily eclipsed due to the supremacy of Buddhism. However, these appear to have revived during the rule of Gonanda III due to the decline of Buddhism, at least for some time until King Meghvahana took over. Upon his ascension, though Buddhism did get a fillip, the Vedic-cum-Nilmat culture, nevertheless, continued to survive. In the beginning of his reign, King Meghvahana's treatment of the Nagas was not good and, in fact, a number of Nagas were imprisoned during his rule.

The Mixed Naga-Aryan Racial Strain

The story of the Nagas and the close relationship with the Vedic Aryans, especially with the remote ancestors of the Brahmins of Kashmir (referred to by the Dogra Rulers as *Kashmiri Pandits* and among the

Kashmiris as the *Bhattas*) including those of their descendents who converted to Islam between 14th to 19th century A.D., indicates that their remote ancestors had a mixed Naga-Aryan racial strain.

One of the reliable sources of tracing their genealogy are the Gotras (Appendix 2). On close scrutiny and probe of the existing Gotras and Gotra Pravaras of Bhattas, it is discerned that, in some families, there appears to be some sort of a genealogical linkage between their Gotras and the Kashmiri Naga eponymous characters, the names of which are not found in any of the Vedic lists of Gotra characters mentioned in the Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda or Atharvaveda. In such cases, these characters appear to be entirely indigenous to Kashmir. On examining the list of prominent Kashmiri Naga sages/chieftains detailed in Nilmat Purana and the list of Gotras of the Bhattas, it is observed that there are eleven Gotra characters which are not present in any of the traditional list of Vedic Rishis, but, in fact, appear in the list of prominent Kashmiri Naga sages, chieftains and other personalities mentioned in the Nilmat Purana. These are: (i) *Bhava,* (ii) *Dhata,* (iii) *Dhuni* (*Dhvani*), (iv) *Gulak,* (v) *Hasya* (*Haasi*), (vi) *Kaana (Kauyana),* (vii) *Mitra,* (viii) *Nanda,* (ix) *Paatah* (*Pat*), (x) *Raja* and (xi) *Vaasak.*

The relevant Naga Gotra characters of Kashmiri Pandits, including other related information, are given in detail in Appendix 2 of this treatise.

On a detailed study of the list of Vedic Rishis, it is evident that 189 Gotras of the Kashmiri Pandits contained Naga antecedents of whom the names are given in the Nilmat Purana. Pandit Anand Koul's book, *The Kashmiri Pandit,* mentions that there are 36 Gotras comprising of Non-Vedic/Naga Gotra characters. This means that about 19% of the total Gotras of the Bhattas have Naga genealogical linkages.

This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the immediate ancestors of present-day Bhattas display their cultural affinity with the

Nagas with pride, and there are interesting instances to prove this. During the calamitous days of Afghan rule in the eighteenth century, the Bhatta women (*Bhattnis*) were forced to wear the Muslim (Iranian) dress called the *Feran* and the head-dress *Kasaba*, and, as a result of this, it became rather difficult for people to distinguish these women from their Muslim counterparts.



Kashmiri Pandit Ladies (Late 19th Century)



Photograph of a Bhatni taken by R.E.Shorter (Late 19th Century)

In order to en-graft a measure of distinctiveness in their women folk, the then Bhatta elders cleverly modified and refashioned the dress in such a way so that they could be called *Naga-Kanyas*. Now, because the emblem of the Nagas was a serpent's head, the head-dress known as *taranga* was provided with a muslin wrapping in the form of a serpent's head and draped down along the back from head to the heels. This was done in such a way that the muslin cloth was tapered and twisted to look like a serpent whose tail touched the heels. This muslin drape is known as *Pooch*. This symbolic representation of the Naga-Kanyas is a tribute to the very close socio-cultural and ethnic relationship that the Bhattas had with the Nagas in ancient times.



Traditional dress of a Bhatni with Taranga, Feran and Pooch (Naga Kanya)

Pisachas, Yakshas and Rakshasas

It is interesting to note that even the Pisachas, Yakshas and Rakshasas, who cohabited with Nagas have also, to some extent, contributed in shaping the Nilmat culture. For instance, if we closely examine the

early pre and post-Vedic literature, we will find that according to Matsya Purana, all Brahmins are supposed to have descended from Brahma. The legend says that seven Brahma Rishis (*Saptrishis*) who came out from Brahma's sacrifice were : (1) *Bhrigu,* (2) *Angiras,* (3) *Marichi,* (4) *Atri,* (5) *Plaha,* (6) *Pulastya* and (7) *Vashistha.*

It is said that while all Brahmins are descendants of the first four Rishis. The 5th and the 6th (*Palaha* and *Pualastya*) gave birth to *Rakshasas* and *Pisachas*, respectively, and when *Vashistha* died, he appeared again as a descendant of the 3rd Rishi (*Marichi*).

If we examine relevant references in the Nilmat Purana, we will find that there are clear instructions even for the worship of Palaha and Pulastya. It will be pertinent to mention here that it was Pulastya who is supposed to have erected shrines at Gangobheda (dedicated to the goddess *Bheda Hamsavaghesvari*), the temple at Manasa (modern Manasbal), Skanda, Sureshvara, Gautamaesha etc. Therefore, Rishi Pulastya, despite being shown to have given birth to the *Pisachas* (supposedly a fiendish race), appears to be of very high standing amongst the sages of Kashmir.

Special attention has been given to the worship of the lord of the *Pisachas, Nikumbha.* This amply shows that the Nilmat culture was egalitarian and assimilative in character, in spite of the diverse racial composition of this society.

Though the Nagas in Kashmir cohabited with the Pisachas (who were also the descendants of Kashypa), the former, in fact, never liked the latter because of their demonic propensities. According to the Nilmat Purana, since the Nagas and Pisachas were hostile to one another, they never lived in peace. There were, however, two groups among the Pisachas, one subservient to their leader Nikumbha (believed to be good and having cordial relations with Nagas) and the other, always giving trouble to Nikumbha and his followers. Through

the efforts of Nikumbha, the troublesome Pisachas were eventually contained. Other tribes and Yakshas continued to give trouble to the newcomers. However, as time passed, their numbers appear to have dwindled and they eventually disappeared from the scene.

Emergence of a distinct assimilative and tolerant Kashmiri spirit

Although the Indo-Aryans and others, who were still in the Rigvedic stage, did not come across entirely as alien cultures, yet the cult of Shiva and the Mother Goddess in the Nilmat tradition became almost a new concept in the formative era of the composite culture that ensued. The emergence of the Vedic-Nilmat tradition was reinforced by the fact that the Aryan and non-Aryan immigrants had already adopted the proto-Harappan cultural elements which, en route their journey to Kashmir, also brought in the prevailing influences from Central Asia, Afganistan, Taxilla etc. As a result of this, the new composite *Nilmat-Vedic* cultural hybrid received a substantial fillip in the cradle of the benign Valley. The Brahmins, in the process of assimilation of this new culture, adopted new ideas which eventually permeated into the day to day life of the Kashmiri Bhattas.

The preludial development of a distinctive Kashmiri culture (with particular reference to those Brahmins who are supposed to be the remote ancestors of present day Kashmiri Bhattas as well as those among them who later converted to Islam) was in an embryonic stage during the early period of human settlement in Kashmir. Although the influx of the immigrants into the Kashmir valley was supposed to have taken place in waves, it is strongly believed that most of the immigrants were polyglot Aryan speaking Rigvedic and non-Vedic peoples imbued with Pisacha cum Harappan nuances.

This inference is mainly based on the then contemporary cultural environment existing in the adjoining regions of Iran, Afghanistan,

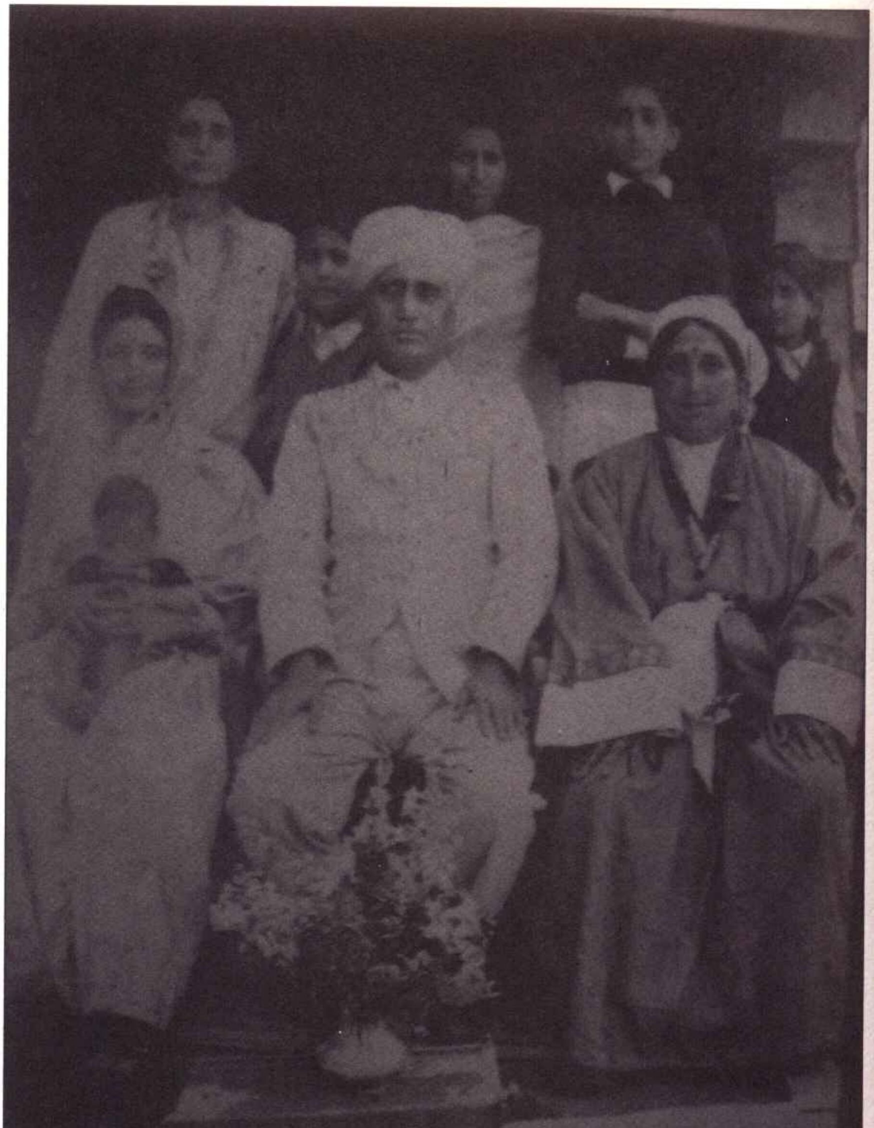
Central Asia, North-Western India, the Indus Valley (now in Pakistan) and East and West Punjab. After the settlement of these immigrants in the Valley, they, in course of time, having come into contact with the native Nagas, experienced a sociocultural convergence with the Naga tribal tradition. This composite ethos gave rise to what came to be known as the *Nilmat* culture which, in turn, gave rise to the spirit of assimilation, tolerence and mutual understanding between the diverse peoples of the Valley which, in later day, came to be known as *Kashmiryat.*



Mainzrath, by Ranjan Nehru (oil on canvas)

~ Chapter 5 ~

Kashmiri Pandit or Bhatta



A Traditional Kashmiri Pandit Family (circa 1939)

The ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits (*Bhattas*) were a product of a polyglot culture which, as mentioned earlier, turned out to be a blend of Rigvedic and the non-Aryan Nilmat way of life. This apparently developed after the Rigvedics settled down in the Valley and came in contact with the Naga aborigines. After this confluence, a new ethos appears to have developed which manifested in the socio-cultural and religious life of the Kashmiri people.

Bhattas

The original appellation given to the members of the early settlers in the Valley, who were the precursors of the Kashmiri Brahmins, was *Bhatta*. The *Pandit* appellation is a much later adaptation. Why they were known as the *Bhattas* cannot be easily determined. However, in order to retrace the origin of the tribes who entered the Valley between the 4th and 3rd millenniums B.C., we would need to find their link with Iran and then with the Indo-European tribes from the north and the northeast of Eurasia via the Slavic areas. The northernmost Indo-European occupation was in the Baltic Sea and the coastal area of Lithuania and Latvia. The inhabitants of this region are still called *Balts*.

S.K. Chatterji in his treatise, *Balts and Aryans,* mentions that the word *Balt* appears to have emerged in Indo-European primitive language as a word for *white*. He says, "The name *Balt* now used for this section of Indo-European speakers has an interesting history. The word was employed in Greco-Roman times in connection with the sea which fringes upon the *Balt* homeland and is still known as the Baltic Sea. The exact meaning of the word *Balt* is not yet satisfactorily established unlike that of the word *Celt* as used for another distinctive branch of the Indo-Europeans."

Thus, the primitive Indo-Europeans word for *white* could have become *Bhalto*, which in Lithuanian and Latvian became *Balt* and in Sanskrit

was referred to as *Bhatt*. There are a series of meanings attached to the word *Bhatta* in Sanskrit like: master, paid servant, mercenary, soldier, fighter and scholar.

It is likely that the word *Bhatta* must have been an appellation used for a scholar in the language used by the early migrants. It was either brought by the so-called Indo-European migrants to the Iranian plateau or, the other way round, by the Indo-European branch to the Baltic region via the Slavic areas during the first wave of incursion. The first incursion of people reflected in nuances of Indo-Aryan, Indo-Iranian and earlier Indo-European cum Mesopotamian civilizations that developed and travelled into northwest India via Pamirs and Gilgit and finally into Kashmir.

There appears to be a strong case in favour of the opinion which upholds the Kashmir-Himalayan uplands and the Bactria-Punjab area as the home of the Rigvedics. If this view is maintained, the migration of some Aryan speaking groups from the outer fringes of their settlements in and around Bactria, Central Asia and the Iranian plateau towards the north of the Black Sea via Azerbaijan and thence to north and Western Europe would, among other things, explain the movement of primitive words like *Bhatta* or the Lithuanian/ Latvian *Bhalto* to the Baltic area. It may be mentioned here that the Latvian and Lithuanian languages are considered by linguists as closely related to Sanskrit. Scholars, such as Latham and others, who have propounded the theory of the European origin of Sanskrit, have maintained that Lithuanian is more akin to Sanskrit and more archaic than any of the other European languages, though according to them, the origin of Sanskrit was European and not Indian.

It is beyond the scope of this study to delve into greater details on this matter, and it will suffice to say that for now it is a well-established fact that linguistically, ethnically, and culturally, the Kashmiris, especially

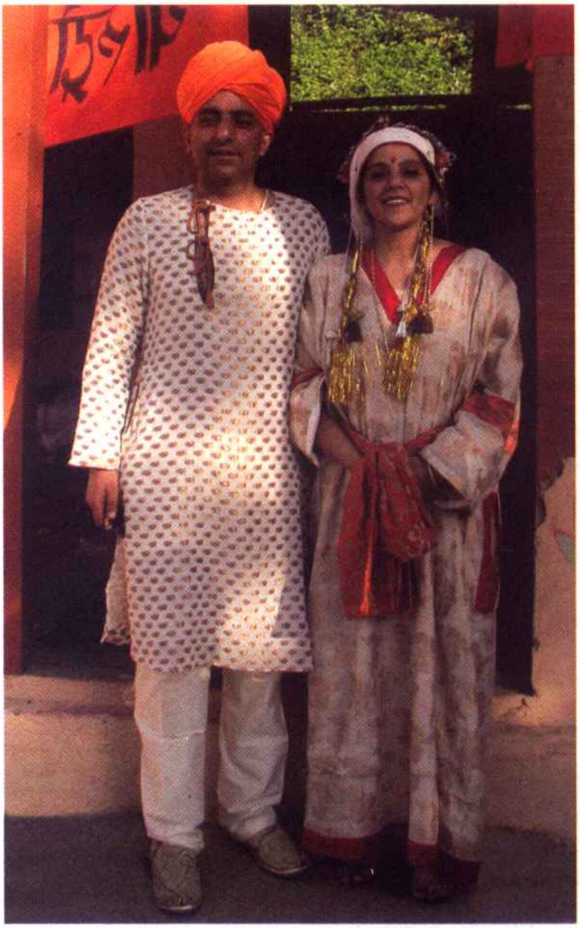
the Kashmiri Brahmins (Bhattas), are the descendants of the Rigvedic Aryans with non-Aryan cultural ethnic and linguistic strains.

Dr. Henny Sender, in her book *Kashmiri Pandits - A study of cultural choice in North India,* writes that "No historical work has dealt in a satisfactory fashion with the origin of Kashmiri Pandits." She further states that, "there is debate concerning the direction from which the Kashmiris came to Kashmir". Colebrook was of the view that the Bhattas were the descendants of the incoming Kanyakubuja Brahmins. M. A. Sherring dismissed the theory of his Banarasi informants that they were related to the *Kanoji* Brahmins. Pandit Hargopal Koul emphatically states, "that as regards the origins of Kashmiri Brahmins, it is certain that it was a colony of Aryan immigrants from Central Asia."

Sherring, in *Hindu Castes and Tribes as Represented in Banaras,* while admitting the antecedents of some of the Brahmins to Kashmir states, "Kashmir is one of the primitive homes of the Brahmins in India is beyond doubt." George Campbell in, *The Ethnology of India* places Kashmiris as a high Aryan race. Hargopal Koul, writing in 1883, places the Kashmiri Pandit community as the "first of the Aryans, the most ancient and purest blood of Kashyapa". Sir Monier Williams in *Modern India and the Indians* says, "The Kashmiri Pandits are among the finest types of Aryan race".

It would therefore be reasonable to conclude that the Kashmiri Pandits or Bhattas belong to the progeny of those early ancestors (tribes) who had colonized the Valley during the early Rigvedic period (i.e. sometime between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th millennium B.C.). The Bhattas thus appear to have ethnic connections with the Indo-Aryan/Indo-Iranian and Indo-European tribes. Linguistically they adopted hybrid words imbibed from the language spoken by the above tribes that, in the course of its proliferation, appears to have commingled with non-Aryan Pisachi

and Prakrit languages, which, in the course of time, came to be known as the *Kashmiri* language. However, later, this basic language hybrid got more Sanskritized due to the immigration of later Indo-Aryans into the Valley, and in fact, after the advent of Islam and the invasions from Iran and Afganistan into the Valley, it got imbued with Persian, Arabic and Urdu words.



Bhatta & Bhatni (Photo 2010)

Saraswats

Many historians and scholars claim that Saraswats are the Rigvedic Aryan Brahmins who settled down on the banks of a river called *Saraswati* (now dry, which used to run in the area presently known as Haryana) in the middle of the second millennium B.C. However, according to the traditional literature, their settlement took place much earlier, sometime before the middle of the third millennium. A. L. Basham in his book, *The Wonder that was India*, has this to say: "When the hymns were written, the focus of Aryan culture was regioned between Yamuna and Sutlej (*Satudri*, south of the modern Ambala) and along the upper course of the river Saraswati."

It has been suggested that Rigvedic Brahmins composed the Vedas, Brahmanas etc. on the banks of river Saraswati and those Brahmins became to be known as the *Saraswats*. It is opined by many scholars that some members of this clan migrated later to Kashmir. However, considering that the Kashmiri Pandits are wholly Sarswat in origin, it would be necessary for these scholars to explain how and why their en masse migration to Kashmir took place.

It will be pertinent to point out here that there are at least four rivers in northwest India and Afganistan which attracted Indo-Aryan/ Indo-Iranian settlements in early Rigvedic period viz. Helmult (i.e. Saraswati) flowing in Afganistan, river Saraswati in Brahmavarta (modern Haryana), river Saraswati in North Gujarat in Mehsana district and the river Saraswati, tributary of river Krishnaganga, in North Kashmir.

There is another river in the region of Devasar (within southern part of the Valley) which too is known as *Saraswati*. All these locations were within the Rigvedic fold in the 2nd and 3rd Millenniums B.C. Therefore, it cannot definitely be said that the Saraswat Brahmins were actually from the banks of the river Saraswati of the Brahmavarta

region and not from any of the above-mentioned alternate locations. Some scholars have even suggested that the repeated mention of river Saraswati in the Rigveda could also refer to the present day great river Sindh, which passes through Ladakh, Pakistan occupied Kashmir, down the Hindu Kush and North-West Frontier region of Pakistan into the Indus basin.

Moreover, the presence of a bulk of Saraswat Brahmins in Kashmir raises further questions. If the suggestion of some historians and other scholars that the Saraswats in the Valley were those who had migrated from the banks of Saraswati river was true, then the primary question arising therefrom would be as to how they entered Kashmir and why? As has been already discussed elsewhere in this treatise, the study of historical geography shows that it is not natural that mass migrations of tribes takes place from the temperate/hot regions to the cold regions, and that too after crossing high mountainous terrains like those of the Kashmir valley. On the contrary, it stands to reason that migration could take place from the cold and mountainous regions to temperate/hot areas of plain topography. Therefore, the theory of mass-migration from the so-called Saraswati river region in Brahmavarta to Kashmir does not appear to be tenable. Further, in the light of what has emerged in this treatise as to the antecedents of the Bhattas of Kashmir, attributing this designation to them on the basis of their supposed origin to the Brahmavarta region, appears to be erroneous and hypothetical.

The theory of migration from cold regions to temperate regions gets endorsed by Heinrich Zimmer when he says, "that Northern Kurus (Uttarkurus) were settled in Kashmir, especially as Kurukshetra is the region where tribes advancing from Kashmir might naturally be found."

Although, there are instances in Rajtarangini where it is mentioned that during the rule of Jalauka, Mihirkula and Gopaditya some

Brahmins were brought from Kanyakubja, Gandhara etc. by these kings, these migrations were, nonetheless, on a very small scale and could not be considered as bulk migrations.

Now, if the theory of their having originally come from the banks of the Saraswati river in the Brahmavarta region is discarded, the question arises as to how certain Brahmin tribes came to be known as *Saraswats*. M.A. Sherring, the famous ethnologist, with regard to the tribes in Kashmir in *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, says:

"Occasionally an ancient Brahminical tribe has suffered a species of social ostracism. This is well illustrated in the case of the Brahmins of Cashmere who are very fair and handsome with highly chiseled features and no trace of intermixture of the blood of any lower race and are quite high Aryan in the type of their features. These Brahmins are very intelligent and of undoubted antiquity. Indeed, some have imagined that all other Brahmins are descended from them. Nevertheless, the tribes in the plains keep aloof from them, and consider that they are not as pure as themselves… and it has come to pass that one of the oldest Brahminical families in India is regarded with something like contempt by the rest of the community. The cause of this feeling is not far to seek. The Cashmere Brahmins are exposed to a cold climate in the winter season of so severe a character, that in order to support life, they are compelled to eat animal food. With some exceptions, the designations of these numerous tribes are geographical and local. For example, the Brahmins of Cashmere if judged simply by the names of their separate clans, would seem, for the most part, to have no communion whatever with Brahmins elsewhere."

He further writes that, "Some are large and important tribes with numerous ramifications exhibiting all the independence and self-confidence of primitive races and one of these is the great Kashmir

tribe. It is undoubted that Cashmere is one of the original seats of the Brahmins in India. Such being the case, there is every reason for the belief that the present Brahmins who have notoriously kept distinct from other races, whether of the hills or of the plains, are lineal descendants of the earliest Brahmin immigrants into Cashmere."

It would, therefore, appear that the Kashmiri Brahmins or Bhattas are the original Brahmins and some of them might have migrated to the Kurukshetra area and other regions during the pre-historic and historic periods. Nonetheless, to assign the appellation of *Saraswat* to certain Brahminical tribes merely because they are assumed to have settled down on the banks of the sacred river (Saraswati) who then migrated to mountainous regions does not appear to be tenable.

The question that arises now is, how did the ancestors of Kashmiri Brahmins or Bhattas get to be known as *Saraswats*? Although nothing definite can be said about this, there appear to be two possible explanations. Firstly, if the appellation *Saraswat* is to be considered to have been a derivative of the name *Saraswati* (the goddess of knowledge, learning and wisdom) and is personified by the river Saraswati, then we may explore the possibility of the existence of a river Saraswati or a shrine somewhere in Kashmir. It has been mentioned earlier that the Valley of Kashmir has been variously known from ancient times as *Satisar, Satidesa* or *Sharada Peetha*. Saraswati in the form of Sharada is considered to be the goddess having three aspects in one i.e. (i) *Sharada* (as goddess of universal knowledge, learning and wisdom), (ii) *Narada* (as goddess of art and music) and (iii) *Vageshwari* (as goddess of speech). The important shrines dedicated to goddess Saraswati from ancient times were situated at two places in Kashmir. The first is located at the confluence of the three sacred rivers at *Sharada* (now in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, just near the Line of Control). This site is at the confluence of the torrents of Madhumati, Saraswati and Krishnaganga. This shrine, known as *Sharda*, used to be the most revered of the holy

places in ancient Kashmir and was, in fact, considered to be an abode of great learning, knowledge and wisdom, famous not only in Kashmir but also in the rest of the sub-continent. The typical Kashmiri script for writing Sanskrit is still known as *Sharda.*

The second, a very important site dedicated to goddess Saraswati (which in olden times used to be one of the most important shrines in Kashmir) was at Budhbrer situated in the southwest of Pulwama, deep in the Beda forests near Keller. The whole area near Budhbrer was in ancient times known as *Bhedavana* and the shrine was variously known as *Gangobheda* or *Bheda-Devi-Saraswati* or *Saraswati-Hamsavagesvari.* The place has a spring with limpid water and was treated in the olden days as a very sacred site representing Saraswati as Hamsavageswari. By then, in Kashmir, the goddess *Saraswati* had attained an important and autonomous role as the patron goddess of the arts, music, letters and speech in a measure which was more significant there than at any other place outside Kashmir. Saraswati or Narada, Sharada or Hamsavageswari is depicted as a beautiful fair young woman waited upon by a *Raj Hansa* (flamingo or swan). The iconographic representation of Saraswati and the goddess's celestial attendant, flamingo (*Rajhansa*), signifies *saras* (water). Hence, she is always associated with water in the form of a spring, river or lake and the very name *Saraswati* appears to have evolved from the word *saras* (also meaning the water-body of a lake).

Another explanation for the appellation *Saraswat Brahmins* to the Kashmiri Pandits is complementary to the first explanation. It may be again pointed out that in pre-historic times, the Valley was also known as *Sati-desha* (*desha* means a country) or *Sati-saras* (Satis's lake). The name *Sati-desa* is used in the Nilmat Purana extensively. The Valley, before its desiccation, as such, was known as *Satisar* or *Saras-sati* (the lake of *Sati* or *Shakti*). This designation of the area continued even after the desiccation. Therefore, the Brahmin tribes who settled in the

Valley after the reclamation of land so formed (after desiccation) were known as *Saraswats* derived from the name *Sati-sar* or *Saras-sati.*

The above mentioned proposition can be further supported by the significant fact that the Saraswat families living in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and elsewhere still recite their prayer as under:

Saraswati mahamayam Kashmirpurvasini,
Shatadara samantatam Saraswat mahamunim.

(I bow to Saraswati who is the great Maya and who is the resident of Kashmirpur and the great sage Saraswat resides in the neighborhood of Shatadara.)

Thus, it is quite probable that the above prayer is recited by Saraswat families living in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and elsewhere by way of paying obeisance to the goddess Saraswati, the resident of Kashmirpur as well as by way of indicating that they, having long ago migrated from Kashmir (the region of goddess Sati of the great lake), through this prayer, aspire to be in communion with the land of their origin.

Therefore, it is plausible that the origin of the appellation *Saraswat* refers to the original Brahmins who, after the desiccation, migrated from the colder regions of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pamirs and settled in Kashmir (the region symbolised by goddess Saraswati) following which they apparently resided along with the local aboriginal tribes like the Nagas, Pisachas and the Yakshas.

In this backdrop it is therefore very reasonable to suggest that the Kashmiri Bhattas could have been assigned with the appellation of *Saraswats*. Some of these Saraswat tribes would have migrated from Kashmir to Brahmavarta and other areas towards the south, west and east of the Indian peninsula from time to time.



Migration

Migrations of Kashmiri Saraswat Brahmins

Migrations of people from their native places to other areas in small numbers are a normal phenomenon throughout the world. But, when migrations in large number or a mass exodus take place, these movements attain historic importance.

Here we are concerned with the migration of the Kashmiri Saraswat Brahmins from Kashmir, their homeland, to other parts of India, right from the proto-historic period to the present times, whether in small numbers or as an exodus. Although there is no authentic historical record to indicate migrations of people from Kashmir during proto or pre-historical periods, Puranic and other sources and traditions do provide some information on this aspect.

If we examine the *Skanda Purana* (which is considered an authoritative text on the proto-historical period) there is an indication that some migrations, though in small numbers, did take place from Kashmir via

Gurjara (modern Gujarat) when the legendary Purushurama brought ten families of Saraswat Brahmins of the Panchagauda branch to Gomachala (Goa) from Trigatra (i.e. now known as *Kangra* which in ancient times was culturally recognised as part of Kashmir).

It is believed that another batch of Saraswat families of Kanyakahiya came to Gomachala (Goa) led by one Lomasharma of Vatsa Gotra, Devasharma of Kaundinya Gotra and Shiv Sharma of Kaushik Gotra who too were originally form Trigatra.

The above source also indicates that some migrations also took place to Goa sometime during the third century B.C. This was a time when Buddhism had overwhelmed the socio-religious scene in the northern region of the country which could have lead to such migrations. The other reason for this could be attributed to the 12 years famine in the northern region of India which occurred during the end of Chandragupta Maurya's regime (297 B.C.).

During the hegemony of the white Huns in the north, in the 5th Century A.D., some migrations are also believed to have taken place from Kashmir. The route of these migrations is supposed to have been Sindh, Gujarat, and further by sea to Goa-Konkan (Western Ghats) regions of Sahyadri mountains (know as Sapta-Konkan). Another version is that the migrations covered Kerala, Malabar, South and North Kanara, Goa, Ratnagiri, Colaba and Thane (ancient Shurparakha). The migrant Saraswat Brahmins were of Bharadwaj, Kaushika, Vatsa, Kaundinya, Kashyapa, Vasista, Jamadagni, Vishwamitra, Atri and Gautama Gotras. These Kashmir Saraswat Brahmin migrants worshipped Shakti in the form of Mangesh and Shanta Durga.

The Chitrapur Saraswats of Karnataka, who are the descendants of the above mentioned migrants, speak Konkani, their mother tongue (which originally descended from the Balabhasha of Sanskrit or Prakrit). As mentioned earlier, the idea of their cultural and socio-religious linkage with their original Kashmiri ethos can be further asserted by the fact that the descendants of these migrant Brahmins

do still observe some religious prayers which clearly point to their linkage with Kashmir.

Bilhana, the famous Kashmiri Brahmin poet, is supposed to have migrated from Kashmir during the reign of King Kalasha (1075-1125 A.D.). It is logical to assume that he, along with many others, must have left Kashmir due to internal unrest, dissensions among the ruling classes and the reign of terror which was unleashed in the Valley during this period.

The most substantial exodus of Kashmiri Brahmins from their ancestral home took place in the late 14th century due to religious persecution unleashed by Sultan Sikander (a fanatical Muslim ruler, also known as *Butshikan* or the Iconoclast) against this community. During this period (upto 1420 A.D.), mass-conversions and rampant desecration of their holy places and temples were the order of the day. It is believed that their existence in the Valley during this period, on account of being subjected to wanton killings at the hands of the invading zealots, was traumatic and that they felt extraordinarily terrorized in the process. It is said that many Brahmins fled Kashmir in waves of migration until only eleven families were left who hid in far-off jungles in the Valley.

It is during this period that the bulk exodus of this community is supposed to have taken place as a result of which migrations to various areas in the northern region of India, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka etc. occurred. It is during this period that 45 families of Kashmiri Brahmins were rehabilitated in Goa by Madhava, the minister of Aparanta Vishaya (present-day Goa and Western India) in 1368 A.D. who donated the villages of Mukhchandi and Pallashapalli to these forty-five Kashmiri Brahmin migrant families.

However, when Sultan Zainallaudin (*Badshah*), the son of Sultan Sikander, became the Sultan of Kashmir (1420-70 A.D.), many Brahmins returned to their native place as the new ruler had an

emancipated disposition and was tolerant towards non-Muslims. The new king was himself a scholar who indeed had a secular mind. It is said that the eleven families, who had hidden themselves in jungles, also returned to their homes during his rule.

It is believed that before the exodus of Kashmiri Brahmins in Sultan Sikander's time there was a uniform social order in their community and that there was no sharp vocational division in the society. Brahmins, without differentiation, used to attend to civil and educational services as well as religious rites and teachings.

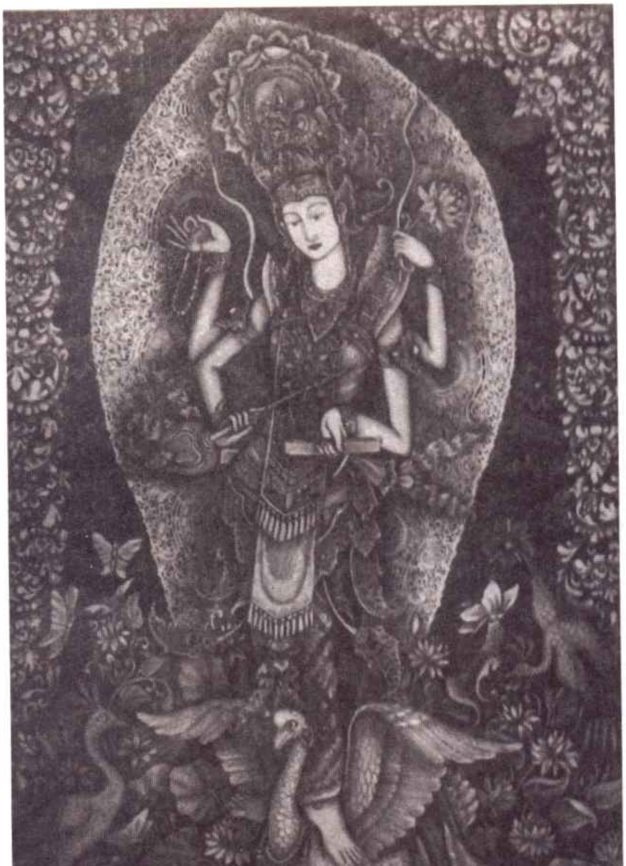
There was no separate class of people attending to religious ceremonies and rites. However, after the exodus and return of the fugitives, the then Brahmin elders decided to segregate their community into employee, *Karkun* and *Gor* (a Guru i.e. a master/teacher which later got corrupted to the term *Goar* which diminished to the stature of a priest) classes so that the undivided attention would be given to the performance of religious rites and teachings. If a Brahmin had two sons; one would attend to religious functions and the other could take up employment or, if the Brahmin had one son and a daughter, his son would take employment while as his son-in-law would devote his time for religious duties and so on. It is this vocational bifurcation which eventually resulted in the formation of two classes; the *Karkuns* (employees) and the *Goars* (Priests). This ultimately gave rise to an unhealthy class division and social segregation.

It may be mentioned here that that these migrants, who had fled from Kashmir and later returned to their native place, were called as *Bhanumasis* (followers of Solar Calendar) because they, after having migrated out of Kashmir, adopted the Solar Calendar and continued to do so even after their return to the Valley. However, all those of the eleven families who had remained in hiding in the jungles of the Valley and who continued to follow the native Lunar calendar came to be known as *Malmasis*. Fortunately, this practice did not result in any social division.

During the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries waves of migrations from the Valley took place from time to time, mainly due to continued religious persecution by Iranians, Mughals and Afghan rulers. These migrations mostly resulted in in the rehablitation of the migrants in parts of Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The ensuing social transformation resulted in a mutually accommodating Kashmiri society comprising Muslims, Pandits, Gujjars and Sikhs.



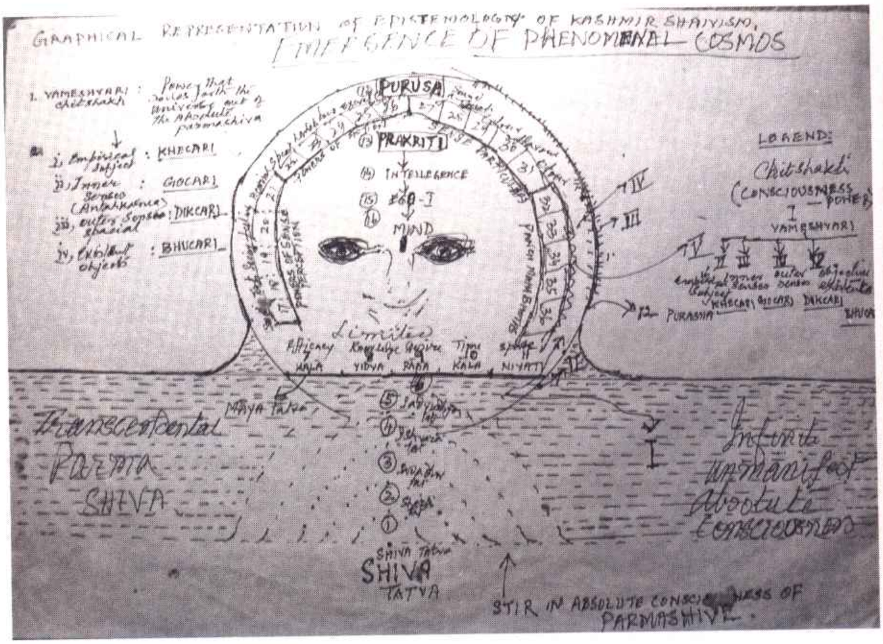
All Kashmiris; Muslims, Pandits, Gujjars & Sikhs (Photo 1895)



Saraswati (Water colour on paper) from Bali (Indonesia)

~ Chapter 6 ~

The Ancient Treasury



Graphical Representation of Kashmir Shaivism by the Author

Religion and Philosophy

Rudimentary Religious Practices

The Naga culture, though not radically different from its Vedic counterpart, had distinctive characteristics of rudimentary Shaivism as well as those involving the female aspect of Godhead (*Shakti*) which, per se, made it rather remarkable. Due to the influence of the Early Harappan culture before the entry of the Rigvedics into Kashmir, the concept of Shiva and Shakti had permeated into the Vedic tradition which gradually took roots in the Valley. However, these concepts got firmly enshrined in the Nilmat culture only after the Vedic Aryans came into contact with the Nagas.

The Rigvedic Brahmins of the Valley, who were the precursors of the Brahminic culture in Kashmir, were basically aniconic (in which images or idols did not play any part) in their religious worship. But, as a consequence of the impact of Nilmat and early Harappan cultures, the iconic representations of deities like Varuna, Indra, Surya, Agni, Shakti, and Shiva were introduced within the fold of their worship. The conception of female aspect of Godhead (Shakti) appears to have taken roots in the early stage of Shaivic worship.

Shiva-Shakti Doctrines

Apart from the pantheon of the Panchratra, the Nilmat Purana deals with the worship of Vedic and aboriginal deities like Shiva and Shakti as the Mother Goddess. Besides this, it provides a panorama of festivals, social functions and visits to the various shrines in the Valley on assigned dates, throughout the year.

It would therefore appear that the Nilmat culture had been the main driving force for the Kashmiris till the 6th century A.D. This of course was punctuated by periods of decline due to Buddhist onslaught. Thus, the Nilmat culture, while being strongly influenced

by Buddhist thoughts and practices, became a compendium of Vedic, Shaivic, Shakti and Pancharatra cults/pantheons/doctrines (discussed hereafter in this Chapter). This resulted in shaping a very remarkable syncretic culture; so complex and yet so natural and tolerant that each strangely appears to blend with the other. Although, superficially, the cult of Shiva-Shakti was alien to Vedic and Pancharatra cults/doctrines, yet all the three were so bonded together that they almost became indistinguishable in the Nilmat Purana and culture. Even Buddhist ideology, though entirely repugnant to Vedic, Shiv-Shakti and Vishnu Bhagavats, was brought within the fold of Nilmat culture. The synthesis of such disparate cultures, as reflected in the Nilmat Purana and the cultural life of the ancient Kashmiris, was the most unique phenomenon with hardly any parallels anywhere in the world.

Rigvedic Legacy

The religion of the Rigveda revolved round Indra, the greatest celestial warrior in addition to gods such as Surya, Varuna, Vishnu and Rudra. The natural things/phenomena, like Prithvi, Aditi, Usha, Aranyani and Savitr were personified and worshipped. The sun worship consisted of Solar Pantheon; Sun's daughter was known as *Surya* and her twin husbands were *Asvin* or *Nasatya*. The Solar Pantheon interestingly has its links with Baltic mythology as well.

Devas and Manavas

Agni was a very important deity of the Rigvedics who represented the Lord of priests, home and hearth. He is also considered as an intermediary between the Devas and Manavas. It is Agni which is supposed to convey the sacrifices made to the gods. He also represents the lightening and the power in water.

Varuna was considered to be next to Indra. He was treated as the highest god by the Indo-Iranians before the division. According to

Rigvedics, he was an emperor ruling the heavens along with Mitra and, in fact, was responsible for inspecting the deeds of men. In Persia he is referred to as the great *God of Light*, *Ahura Mazda* (as per Zorathustra or Zoroaster) and *Dyaus* by the Indo-Europeans.

Rudra was another celestial god who, according to Rigvedics, was dangerous, amoral and, while representing the storm and invoking fear in mortals, was also stated to be a remote god who lives in the mountains. He was also looked upon as a guardian of healing and herbs and, as such, was considered as a giver of health to mortals.

Vedic sacrifice was the most important part of Aryan culture. The purpose of this sacrifice was to gratify the gods so as to lead to rewards or boons. The sacred mantras (sacred utterance) were meant to create an atmosphere of supernatural efficacy.

These were some of the basic features of the Vedic worship that were brought into the Valley by the Aryan immigrants somewhere in the 3^{rd} or the beginning of the 4^{th} millennium B.C.

While as the Rigvedic Aryans were more or less governed by the celestial gods like Vishnu, Indra, Varuna, Surya and Agni, the *Naga* religion was inclined to use symbols of nature for worship including those of zoomorphic deities like snakes and reptiles in adition to mother goddess and phallus.

Dr. R.K.Kaw in his treatise, *Doctrine of Recognition*, says:

"In the development of philosophical thought in India there arose two main movements; the Vedic and non-Vedic. The Vedic movement grew within the ambit of Vedic scriptures and the non-Vedic movement developed from the Shaivagamas and Shiva scriptures. The former started sometime between the second and third millennium B.C.; that is when Aryans settled in this country and produced their literature known as the Vedic literature. Some hymns of the Rigveda, the oldest

of the Vedas, and the later Vedic literature, the Upanishads, indicate that various speculations were held by the Vedic Aryans regarding the origin and nature of creation. The Shiva movement in India dates from centuries earlier than the Vedic movement. The inscriptions of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa have revealed that the Shiava cult was in vogue as far back as 3000 B.C."

Shiva

The mythological divine trinity in the Hindu pantheon of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (who is identified with Shiva) represents an integral unity in diversity of one supreme reality. This mythological trinity symbolizes the cyclic 'manifestation or creation' (*Bramha*), 'sustenance' (*Vishnu*) and 're-absorption' (*Mahesh*) of the entire phenomenal cosmos. Each of the gods of this trinity has been and is the object of adoration as a personal god for the purpose of faith and devotion since remote antiquity. Whereas Brahma and Vishnu are Vedic gods, Mahesh is not mentioned in the Rigveda directly, but finds a place as *Rudra* in all the four Vedas: *Rig, Sama, Yajur* and *Atharva*. The primitive form of Shiva can be traced from the seals of Mohenjo-Daro wherein the three-faced figure surrounded by animals was named by Sir John Marshall as the proto-Shiva which later assumed the form of *Pashupati* or the Vedic god *Rudra*. This proto-Shiva eventually merged with the Vedic Rudra, evolving into the Shiva of later times.

Shiva was as popular as Vishnu and had evolved, as mentioned above, from the fierce aspect of Vedic god known as *Rudra*. The Shiva of the later times became wholly moral and a paternal *father-in-heaven*. His character is ambivalent unlike that of Vishnu. He is usually found in cremation grounds, battle fields etc.

Shiva is also shown as a great ascetic. His abode is in the great Himalayas on a peak called *Mount Kailasha* and he is a great Yogi,

deep in meditation. He also assumes the form as Nataraja (the lord of celestial dance). He is worshipped as the *Dakshin Murti* in South India.

However, in Kashmir, Shiva has mostly been worshipped in the form of a *linga* (phallus). It has been observed that linga-worship is a remnant of a cult practice dating to even before the Harrappan civilization. It is not known where linga-worship actually originated. The immigrants, mostly of the non-Aryan stock, could have actually brought it into Kashmir with the first colonization of the Kashmir valley or it could be an entirely indigenous phenomenon. The Nilmat Purana incorporates the worship of Shiva in an elaborate form.

Shakti

Shakti, the mother Goddess cult is also very ancient. In Kashmir the original inhabitants like Nagas, besides assimilating Vedic, Pancharatra and Buddhist approaches and practices, were worshippers of Shiva-Shakti (as discussed in Chapter 3 under the heading, *Theology and Origin of Nagas*). Such a flexibility was possible because even in Harrappan culture the worship of the Mother Goddess was also in vogue besides the fact that in Rigveda too we have references to feminine aspect of Godhead like *Prithvi, Gayatri, Savitri* and *Usha*. However, in the Vedas, their worship did not have the same status as was given to *Indra, Varuna, Vishnu, Surya* etc.

There are various forms of Shakti such as *Parvati, Sati, Mahadevi, Gauri, Sharda, Sharika, Ragnya, Jwala, Kali, Chandi, Durga* and *Bhavani*. Considering the Naga influence and the androgynous symbol of the serpent adopted by them (as discussed earlier in Chapter 3 of this treatise), the Shiva-Shakti culture and worship (the male and female pantheon of God-head which developed into a peculiar form in Kashmir) attained a very high socio-religious status since very ancient times.

Shiv-Shakti

The concept of Shiva and Shakti, as such, evolved in a way that while Shiva came to be worshipped in the form of the linga or the phallic symbol, Shakti came to be worshipped in the form of the yoni, (the feminine symbol). The Shiva linga is an esoteric representation of the *Nirakar-Rupa* (formless and un-manifest form) of Supreme Reality. Its spherical shape connotes that the supreme deity has no particular *athara* (shape). It is infinite and transcendent (surpassing all limitations). Shiva, when subject to limitation, turns immanent (all pervasive) and becomes the power of consciousness or Universal Energy or the Shakti aspect of Shiva.

Thus, Shiva along with his complement Shakti, both came to be worshipped in the unified form of *Ardhanaareshvara* – the androgynous half-male and half-female image. This aspect has already being discussed in detail earlier in this treatise while mentioning the lore of the ancient Naga symbolisms which proliferated in different parts of the world in form of varied traditions while involving the same basic concept.

It may be of interest to note that the Shiv-Shakti cult, while being in vogue during the period of Indus Valley Civilization, was also practiced prior to the Chalcolithic age. Thus, considering its world-wide proliferation in different forms, it became the oldest living faith in the world. It has been already indicated earlier that the cult of Shiva & Shakti was not only already existing in the Valley before the coming of the Rigvedic Aryans and other tribes into Kashmir but was also brought along by the immigrants, perhaps through the influence of the early Mohenjodaro and Harappan cultures in the north-west of India. In this context it may be of interest to refer to what Mr. Gulam Rasool Santosh, the well known artist/painter from Kashmir, says (Appendix 4) about the sound bearing images projected by the

rocks around the Hari-Parbat hill at Srinagar which, according to him, have some correlation with the pictoral script of Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

Indian Tradition

The main scriptures of the Indian tradition are Vedas, Smritis, Puranas and the Agamas. The Smritis and Puranas form the basic foundation of ancient Indian literature. The views concerning any issue or aspect of the Vedas are contained in the Nigamas, whereas the Agamas share a common world-view which could be quite different from those dealt with in the Nigamas. The Nigamas comprise six schools of philosophy (known as *Shad Darshanas* i.e. *Vedanta, Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya, Mimansa and Yoga*).

The religious practice of the Hindus (*Dharmashastras*) prescribe three main streams for the worship (*Puja*) of Hindu deities (*Devatas*). These are: *Nigama, Agama and Lokacara.*

Nigama is a pure Vedic system in contrast to *Agama,* which is a tantric system of rituals. *Lokacara* is the combination of both or along with some other system which is followed with reference to the prevailing conditions of the locality, time and authorities. The guide for Vedic worship (*Upasana*) within the spectrum of Nigama is called *Karmakanda.*

Agama Shastra, means a traditional doctrine, or system which commands faith. It also means understanding things correctly and comprehensively. The Agama Shastras are based in the belief that the divinity can be approached in two ways. It can be viewed as *nishkala* (formless – absolute) or as *sakala* (having specific aspects or attributes). The Agama traditions have been the source of early yogic and self realization concepts in India. These influenced thinkers and philosophers who sought an alternative to the excessive ritualism and sacrifices of the Vedic system of that time. Besides many non-Vedic

Hindu texts, early Jain and Buddhist scriptures are also called *Agama* texts.

The Agamas, depending upon the family deity (*Ishtadevata*) worshipped by a devotee, are divided into three main groups: Shiva (or *Shaiva*), Shakti (or *Shakth*) or Vishnu (*Vaishnava*). The first is the *Shaiva Agama*, the second the *Shaktha Agama* and the third is the *Vaishnava Agama* or *Pancharatra*.

The Shaiva Agama, deals with the worship of the deity in the form of Shiva. It reveres the ultimate reality as Lord Shiva (*Shaivism*). This branch, in turn, gave rise to *Shaiva Siddantha* of the south and the *Prathyabijna* school of Kashmir Shaivism.

The Shaktha Agama prescribes the rules and tantric rituals for worship of *Shakti*, the Divine Mother. The Shakta-Agamas (Tantras) venerate the ultimate reality as Shakti the consort of Shiva and Divine Mother of the universe (Shaktism).

The third one, *Vaishanava Agama* adores God as Vishnu, the protector. This branch has two major divisions, *Vaikhanasa* and *Pancharatra*. They (as *Pancharatra* and *Vaikhanasa Samhitas*) adore the ultimate reality as Vishnu (*Vaishnavism*).

Each Agama consists of four parts: (i) The philosophical and spiritual knowledge, (ii) The yoga and the mental discipline, (iii) The specific rules for the construction of temples and for sculpting and carving the figures of deities for worship in the temples, and (iii) The rules pertaining to the observances of religious rites, rituals and festivals.

The Agama methods include worship of images of God through rituals (*Tantra*), symbolic charts (*Yantra*) and verbal symbols (*Mantra*). Some Agamas regard devotion and complete submission to the deity as fundamental to pursuit of their aim; while believing that wisdom, enlightenment (*jnana*) would follow, eventually, by the grace of the

worshipped deity. The Agamas seek the grace, mercy and love of the Supreme God (represented by the personal deity) leading to liberation from earthly attachments (*Moksha*). Agamas, given the context in which they may be used, are also sometimes known as *Tantras*.

The Shiva cult has three main branches of religio-philosophies i.e. 1) *Shiva Siddhanta* of Tamil Nadu, 2) *Vira Shiva* of Deccan- Karnataka and 3) *Trika* of Kashmir (which is also referred to as Advaita Shiva). Although there are some common features amongst all these three philosophies, but, nonetheless, the first two, among other Shiva doctrines, have some vital differences with Trika of Kashmir.

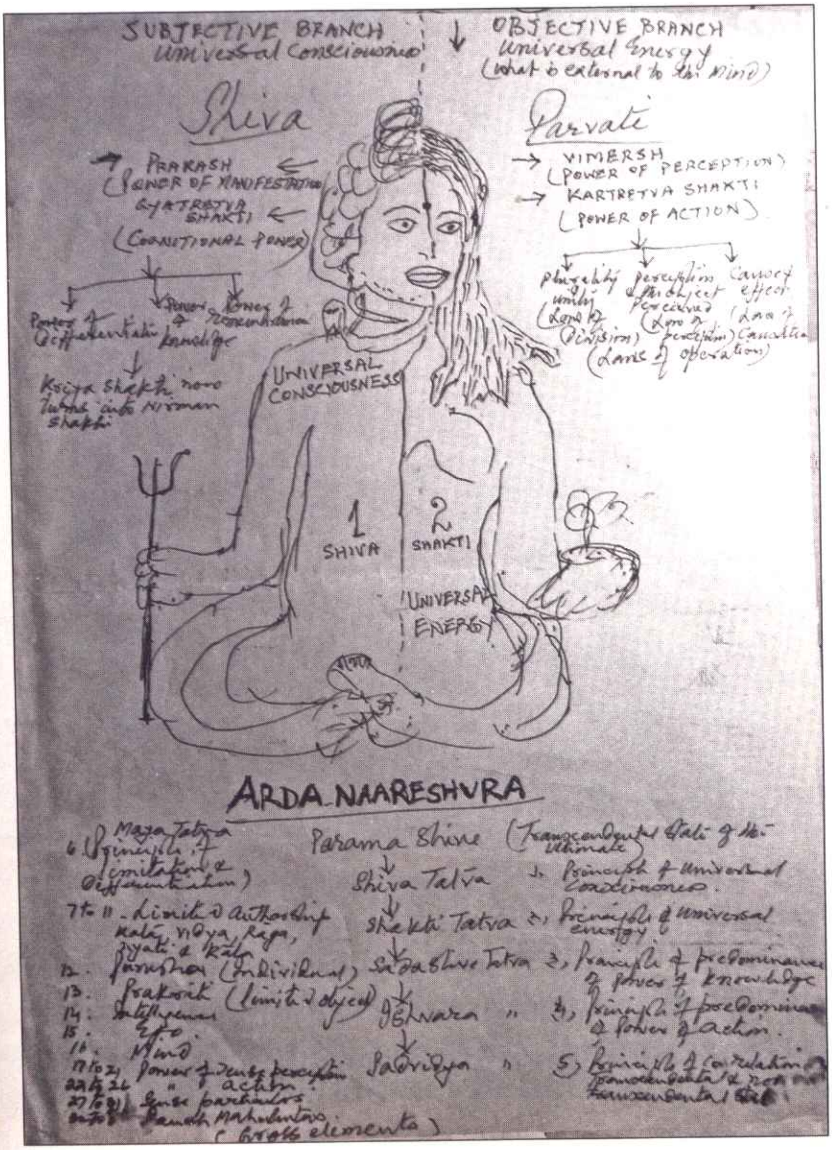
There are numerous Agamas and their tradition is vast and complex comprising several schools in each of the three streams viz. Shaivic, Vaishnava and Shakta pantheons that are being followed in the sub-continent. However, many of these Agamas had common ideas and concepts. The root meaning of the word Agama suggests "movement" in the sense of indicating a flow of ideas and traditions. Some scholars are of the opinion that it is the Agamas rather than Nigamas which are more pristine and form the traditional documents of Indian Civilization. The Agamas developed their own distinct visions and concepts according to their local environments. Thus, the ambiance of Agamas of Kashmir, per se, is spontaneous and vivacious rather than subdued in that they reflect a way of life which is boisterous, life-affirming and its approach is pragmatic rather than esoteric. It is therefore obvious that these Agamas preferred to remain dissociated from the nihilistic view of the early Buddhism as well as *Nirguna-Nirakar* [attribute-less and without form i.e. Brahman of the *Advaita* (non-duel); which is the Vedantic aspect of the transcendental supreme reality]. The effervescence and joyousness is the most important feature of both folk and Agamic traditions wherein creation and celebration of images and symbols became their quintessential matrix.

It is the Agamas which adopted the symbolism of assigning human body with human attributes to God-head as reflected in the early evolution of the Vedas and Upanishads. The Agamas may be characterized as a culture of images rather than of words. They may be treated as compendium of the foundational premises concerning and comprising creation, enjoyment and celebration which involve and require a deep understanding of such images and symbols.

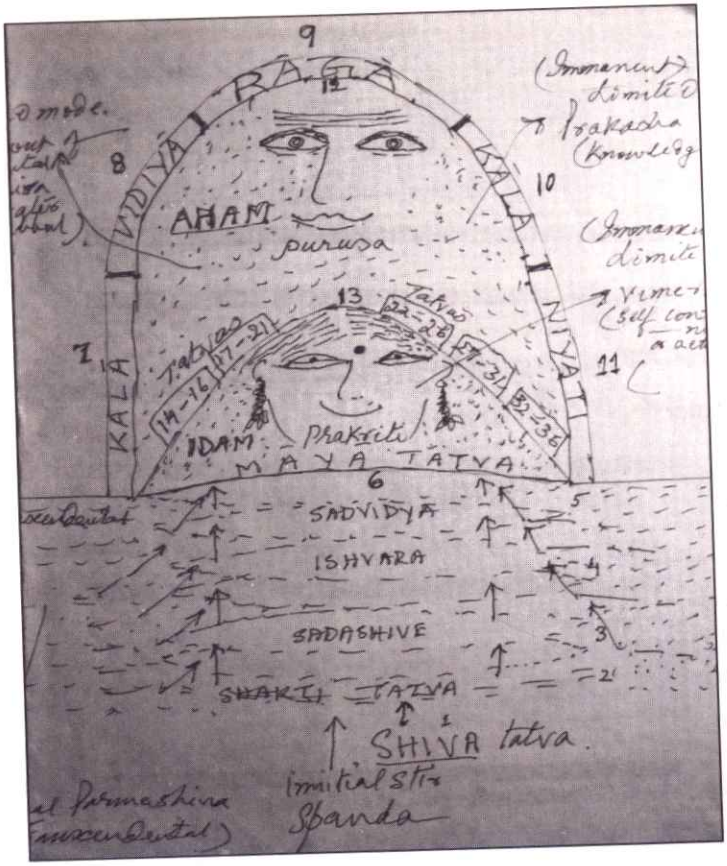
Kashmir Shaivism (Trika)

The Shaiva Agama considers expression of creation or manifestation through *vak* (speech) and *artha* (substance) which can be divine or human. Divine speech has eternal existence and is expressed in *Dvaita* (dualistic), *Dvaitadvaita* (dualistic cum monistic) and *Advaita* (monistic) terms as propounded by Srinatha, Amardaka and Trayambaka, respectively. This, in turn, gave rise to three corresponding Tantric schools. The Advaita school, as Shaiva Monism of Kashmir or Advaita Tantra, as expounded by Trayambaka, comprised three branches; *Trika, Kula* and *Krama* which are the main springs of Shaiva philosophy and religion of Kashmir. Somananda, who was the great grand teacher of Abhinavagupta, is said to be the 19th descendant of Trayambaka.

The history of Shaivism in general and, in Kashmir in particular, is shrouded in mystery. There is no doubt that Shaivism in one form or the other was prevalent in Kashmir from very ancient times. Kalhana's Rajtarangini amply shows that the culture of Shaiva & Shakti in Kashmir had been in vogue in Kashmir right from the Mahabharat period. However, the important principles of Kashmir Shaivism, which had become out of use for a long time, were reintroduced in Kashmir by sage Vasugupt in his Shivsutras between 800-850 A.D.



Graphical Representation of Kashmir Shaivism by the Author.



Graphical Representation of Kashmir Shaivism by the Author.

Kashmir Shaivism or *Trika* (three or triad) is a system of idealistic monism in which the philosophical aspect attains more importance than the cult and the ritual. It is known as *Trika*, because the Shiva literature (that is of Kashmir Shaivism) can be divided into three important parts namely: 1) *Shiva Agama*, 2) *Pratyabhijna Shastra* [comprising: (i) Shiva, (ii) Shakti and (iii) Nara (the bound soul) emerging as reflections based on Shaiva Agama] and 3) *Spanda Shastra*.

Table 1

Type	Major features
Shiva Agama Shastra	Gives the rudiments of Kashmir Shaivism and also shows the path of practical realization by emphasizing on its practice as a distinct system of yoga.
Pratyabhijna Shastra (Doctrine of Recognition)	Deals with the philosophy proper of Trika system (Kashmir Shaivism). It lays emphasis on the theoretical method of realization i.e. the pursuit of knowledge and rational thinking alone, which is essential for liberation and relegates the yogic methods to a subordinate position.
Spanda Shastra (Doctrine of Vibrations)	Contains the important doctrines of the system and principles of the Shiva-Sutras by using the concept of vibrations.

Intrinsically, the principles of Kashmir Shaivism are the integral matrices of all the three above mentioned shastras; together known as the *Trika Shastras*. Each shastra represents a particular aspect of a single ultimate principle (Parmashiva or the supreme reality of the universe in its transcendental form). While as the practice of Kashmir Shaivism as a system of yoga is called the *Shaiva Agma Shastra*, its philosophy is represented by two schools, namely: (i) the Doctrine of Recognition (*Pratyabhijna)* and (ii) the Doctrine of Vibration/Pulsation (*Spanda*).

Shaiva Agama Shastra

The Shiva Agama Shastra as expounded above (under the heading, 'Kashmir Shaivism') expresses the rudiments of Kashmir Shaivism and shows the path of practical realization by practices of a separate system of yoga.

Doctrine of Recognition (Pratyabhijna)

Kashmir Shaivism, particularly the *Pratyabhijna* (Doctrine of Recognition), is a product of indigenous genius and introspection. It is unique in the sense that it transcends all barriers and, as such, it is universal and humane.

It lays emphasis on the theoretical method of realization i.e. the pursuit of knowledge and rational thinking which it states is essential for liberation and, as such, it relegates the yogic methods to a subordinate position. It is, in fact, the philosophy proper of Kashmir Shaivism. Pratyabhijna Shastra, in other words, is the 'Doctrine of Recognition' which teaches that the individual self (*Jiva*) is identical with the universal self (Shiva). Jiva has forgotten his real self due to the limitation of his psycho-physical mechanism. It is a doctrine which says that the individual should recognize his real nature and be aware of his inner being. This philosophy brings home to the individual the truth that once he recognizes his real self, he will be free from his egoistic disposition (which is the product of identification of his self with his psycho-physical mechanism). Thus, it is reckoned that he will ultimately realize that his real self is identical with the universal self. It contends that he should know his deeper faculties if he desires to attain the bliss of liberation. The Doctrine of Recognition is directed towards removing of the veil of ignorance. It says that the individual self or Jiva is essentially divine (Shiva) which has forgotten his real nature.

Table 2

Main principles of the Doctrine of Recognition	
1	The ultimate reality (Shiva), of its own free will, causes the manifestation, maintenance and withdrawal of the universe.

2	The ultimate reality unfolds the universe upon its own screen.
3	The universe appears to be different and infinitely manifold because of the differentiation of experience (subject) and the experienced (object).

The stages of individual consciousness and corresponding perceptions involved in the Doctrine of Recognition are mentioned below.

Table 3

1	In the beginning, the ego (I-ness) is pronounced. The experience of the universe is in the incipient (beginning) stage, i.e. the individual subject experiences "I am this", where 'I' is pronounced and 'this' is indistinct.
2	At the next stage the consciousness of the individual experiences, clearly and distinctly, the 'I' and 'this' of the universe.
3	At this stage, the 'this' (of the universe) appears as different from 'I' (the individual subject). There is an experience of diversity and multiplicity, though there is an underlying unity between the two perceptions.
4	This stage is that of 'Maya' (the illusive sense of difference). The individual subject has neither a clear consciousness of 'I' nor of 'this' and thus the perception can be said to be that of the 'void'.
5	Then follows the experience of total diversity and the individual identifies with such a perception.

h. The ultimate reality (God as Shiva, having supreme or absolute consciousness) as individual *Jiva*, in the course of liberation, transcends material manifestation of the Cosmos. When this happens, the individual subject experiences permanent bliss and

identity with everything from the stages one to five as mentioned above and thus attains God (absolute consciousness) by expanding from the lowest stage to the highest. In other words, God, as supreme or absolute consciousness, flashes forth in various forms of manifestation.

i. The individual subject, in whom cosmic consciousness is contracted, has the universe (as his body) in a contracted form. It is the supreme or absolute consciousness (Shiva) which; by assuming contraction becomes both the universe and the experience (individual subject), of the universe. When the individual recognizes this, he is said to be liberated.

j. The individual consciousness (as self or *jiva*) is a manifestation of the universal consciousness of the absolute reality (God) who, descending from its stage of absolute consciousness to the level of the individual mind, becomes contracted in conformity with the object of consciousness, i.e. universal consciousness becomes the individual mind by limitation.

k. Supreme or absolute consciousness is beyond the space-time continuum. Although it is one, it pervades through 36 stages of its material existence from its supreme effulgence down to all the components of the earth (36 stages or tatvas), which is also its nature.

l. Various systems of thought have emerged over the ages about the understanding of the self and its relation to God.

   i. Some philosophers, for instance, say that the self is identical with the body which is characterized by consciousness.

   ii. Some consider the *Buddhi* (intellect) to be the self.

   iii. Buddhists consider only the functions of intellect as the self.

   iv. Some Vedantists treat *Prana* (life energy) as the self.

v. Some Vedantists accept *Ishvara* (Godhead) as the highest principle.

vi. However, the followers of *Trika* (Kashmir Shaivism) consider that the supreme atma (ultimate reality) is both immanent (all pervasive) and transcendental (i.e. it's existence is beyond the material universe).

f. As a consequence of limitation of the creative aspect of universal consciousness, the ultimate reality, which is all consciousness, gets entangled in cycles of transmigrations. The individual *Jiva*, just like Shiva, even in this condition of limitation, expresses itself through five activities like manifestation, maintenance, withdrawal, concealment and grace.

The Doctrine of Vibrations (Spanda)

The stir of absolute consciousness is a creative movement, a transition from the uncreated state of 'being' to the created state of 'becoming'. *Being* is in a state of perpetual *becoming* and this transition constantly remains in a flux of finite expressions of the phenomenal universe. *Being* and *becoming*, as two polarities (like vibrations), are the inner and outer faces of universal consciousness, which becomes spontaneously manifest through its inherent power.

The inner face or the inner being of consciousness stays beyond the realm of the space-time continuum as a pure subject, devoid of all objective content. The inner being is the abode of omniscience (all-knowingness) and every other divine attributes. It can never cease to exist because nothing else can be perceived outside of it. The outer face of consciousness represents all-pervasive diversity and the ever changing phenomenal universe; the object. The state of its oneness with the subject is intrinsic and the state of separation from it is extrinsic. After making itself manifest, absolute or supreme consciousness (Shiva) abides as both subject and object and playfully

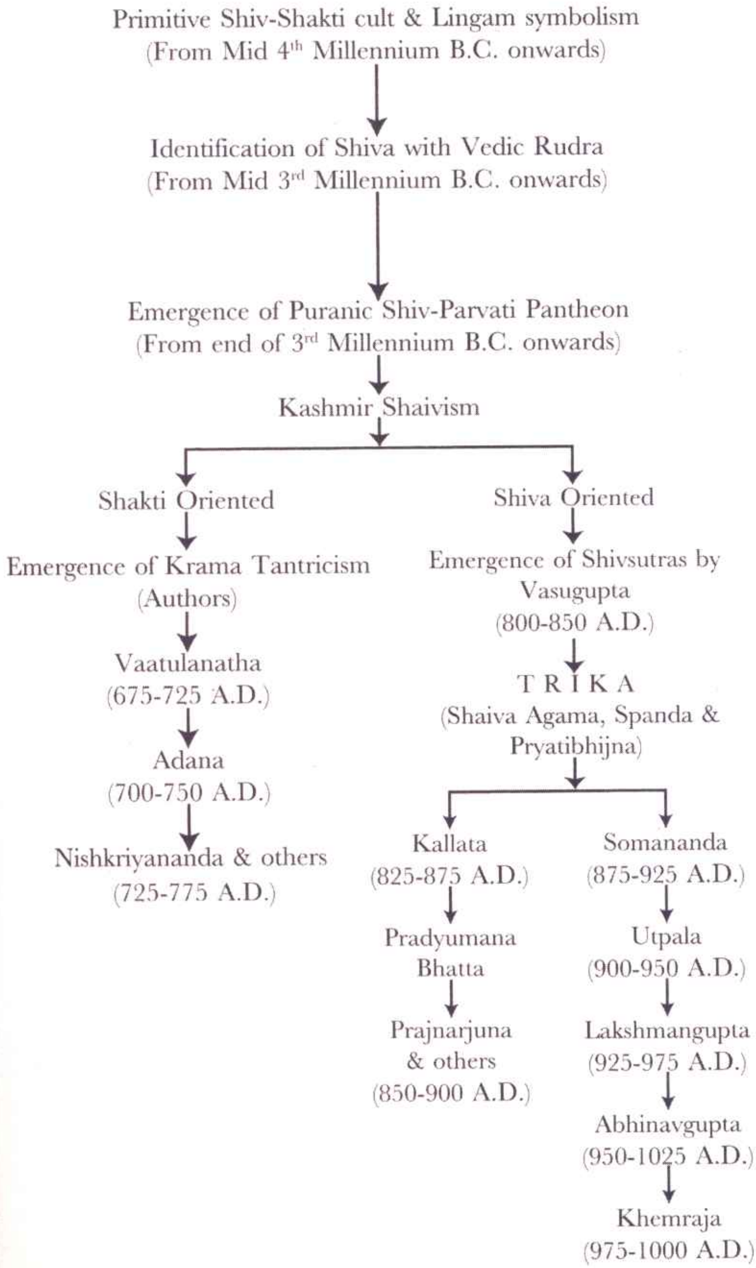
gives rise to the subject and the object by virtue of His innate freedom as both the *enjoyer* and the *enjoyed*, which is the basis of every activity in this world of dualities. The sense of separation between the subject and the object, with all the limitations it imposes upon itself, is called *Maya*. Abhinavgupta prayerfully addresses Shiva thus:

"When your nature expands, you, I and the entire universe come into being; when it is withdrawn, neither you nor I nor the *universe* exists. The universe awakes when you awake and is destroyed when you sleep. Thus the entire universe of *being* and *non-being* is one with you. While the outer face (*the object*) appears to be a distinct reality set apart from the inner (*the subject*), the latter contains the totality of the former".

The quintessence of the doctrine of vibration (Spanda) is that the seeker recognizes his own authentic *being* by being as God is. The human body is to be treated as a sacred embodiment of *the pure being* and the consciousness of *the being* coincides with the worship of *the being*. Thus, the human body becomes the epitome of the universe and as a pure embodiment of pure consciousness.

Abhinavgupta says that the human body is the abode of all the movements of time and space. The body seen in this way comprises all the gods and must therefore be the object of veneration, contemplation and sacrifice.

Emergence of Kashmir Shaivism



Authors of Trika

The literature on Shaiva Agama, Pratyabhijna and Spanda Shastra includes principal works of Batta Kallata and Somananda who were the disciples of Vasugupta (the author of works on Shiva-sutras, Spanda-Shastras and Pratyabhijna-Shastras). This was followed by works written by Prajnaarjuna, Utpala, Lakshmangupta, Abhinavgupta, Khemraja, Mahadeva Bhatta and Bhaskara who further contributed to the school of Trika philosophy.

The Trika authors were chronologically contemporaneous to various rulers of Kashmir from Chippatjayapida (800 A.D.) to Sangramraja (1003 A.D.) as mentioned in table below:

Table 4

Trika Authors	Contemporaneous kings of Kashmir. Period (800 A.D. to 1003 A.D.) of their rule.
Vasugupta, Bhata Kallata, Pradyumana Bhata, Prajnarjuna, Mahadeva Bhata and Somananda	Chippatjayapida Ajitapida, (813 A.D.). Avantiverman (855-883 A.D.) and Shankerverman (883-902 A.D.)
Trivikrama, Siddhanantha, Bhaskara, Utpala Bhatta and Lakshmangupta	Chakraverman, Yashaskara and Abhimanyu
Abinavagupta and Khemaraja	Queen Dyedda (900-1003 A.D.) and Sangramraja.

Literature on Kashmir Shaivism (800-1000 A.D.)

The prolific literature on Kashmir Shaivism, still extant, is the outcome of the efforts of many prominent exponents of the Trika for a number of generations. The most important treatises on Kashmir Shaivism are Spanda and Pratyabhijna Shastras. This, as well as Kula and Krama Tantricism in Kashmir are the products of deep spiritual practices and introspection by prominent sages and scholars from the beginning of the ninth century A.D. It will be seen that there was a tremendous intellectual and spiritual upsurge right from 800 A.D. to 1000 A.D. This period can be termed as the period of 'intellectual renaissance' in Kashmir. During these two centuries scholars and luminaries came to shine in all their brilliance in the intellectual firmament of Kashmir. These scholars were not only among the most prominent ones in Kashmir but were also well-known in the rest of India and abroad for their contribution in the realm of literature, theology and philosophy.

Commentaries on the Trika texts and other treatises by Kashmiri authors and their chronology

Table 5

1	Somananda (850-900 AD)	i. Shiva Drishti ii. Shiva Drishti iii. Vritti
2	Utpala (900-950 A.D.)	i. Pratyabhijna Karika ii. Vritti on above iii. Stotravali iv. Ishvara Siddi v. Ajadapramatri Siddi

3	Abhinavagupta (993-1015 A.D.)	i. Para-Trimshika Vivarana ii. Pratyabhijna Vibriti Vimarshini iii. Tantraloka iv. Tantrasara v. Parmarthsara vi. Pratyabhijna Vimarshini
4	Vasugupta (800-850 A.D.)	Laid the foundation of Trika and wrote: i. Spandamrita ii. Spanda Karikas iii. Vasavi Tika (commentary on Gita)
5	Bhata Kallata (825-875 A.D.)	i. Spanda Karikas ii. Spanda Vritti or Spanda Sarvasra iii. Tattvartha Chintamani
6	Bhatanayaka (855-902 A.D.)	i. Dhvanyaloka-locana and author of Alamkara ii. A great Vedic scholar
7	Khemaraja (975-1000 A.D.)	i. Shivasutra Vritti ii. Shivasutra Vimarshini iii. Pratyabhijna Hridayam Spanda Sandoha iv. Spanda Nirnaya
8	Yogaraja (1000-1050 A.D.)	Commentary on Paramarthasara.
9	Bhaskara (925-975 A.D.)	Shiva Sutra Varthika.
10	Jayartha (1150-1200 A.D.)	Commentary on *Tantraloka.*

11	Shivapadhyaya (1754-1762 A.D.)	Commentary on *Vijnana Bhairava Tantra..*

Krama and Kula Systems of Kashmir

Whereas Pratibhijna does not subscribe to the idea of spiritual progression, Krama system intrinsically and wholly depends on the principle of spiritual progression which is the synthesis of *Bhoga* (receiving the effect of one's karma) and *Moksha* (salvation).

Dr. Navjivan Rastogi in his treatise, *Krama Tantricism of Kashmir* says:

"Thus, the tantric ideal of self-realization as synthesis of Bhoga and Moksha, better termed as Bhoga-Moksha-Samarasya, is realizable in the Krama system alone. It is solely the Krama system which, by virtue of its theory of progressive refinement of Vikalpas (options), lays emphasis on each and every step of self-realization as an embodiment of spirituality. The Kula and Pratyabhijna are not opposed or averse to such an ideal, but they do not have proper scope for it, since they adhere to the concept of instantaneous and immediate self-realization. The image of Krama system becomes clear only when we see through its concept of Samarasya of Dharma-Varna (name and form) and Chit (consciousness)."

Thus, the Krama system entails a step by step realization and progression through various milestones in space and time (*Shaktipaya*) into a state of supreme energy; just like the rising of the Kundalini. The Shaktipaya comprises twelve movements of cognition.

The Kula system, on the contrary aims to enable a practitioner to live in totality (*Kula*). Discarding individual energy, he aims to enter into the blissful field of the energy of the totality.

Panchratra/Vishnu-Bhagvatas

The most important contribution of the Nagas was, however, the evolution of Panchratra (Bhagvatas or Vaishnavas or Vasudevas) and the Shakti cult. The doctrine of Panchratra, which is supposed to have been propounded by Rishi Sandilya, was also incorporated in the Nilmat long before 2nd century B.C. in Kashmir. He is the same Rishi who is supposed to have brought goddess Sharda (the goddess of knowledge and learning) to Kashmir at the confluence of Madhumati, Saraswati and Krishnaganga rivers at Sardi (north-west of Srinagar on the Line of Control in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir). Sandilya is also one of the major Gotra Rishis of Kashmiri Pandits (Bhattas).

The following verse in the Nilmat indicates the importance of Panchratra:

Pancaratravidhanena vedyam avahya tam budhah
asanastham yathasaktya snapayeta yathavidhi Nilmat V 420

"That (image) in the proper manner should be placed
on the seat in accordance with the Pancharatra rules
and according to ones means."

The Nilmat Purana has devoted about 32 verses for detailed worship of the Bhagvatas. So progressively, as the time passed, Nilmat rather became richer and richer in its content. This culture, in fact, become a repository of Vedic wisdom while incorporating Shaivic and Shakti doctrines in addition to the Pancharatra pantheon/doctrine.

The doctrine of Panchratra concerns itself with a sect of the Bhagavatas (worshippers of god Vishnu identified with the incarnation of Lord Krishna). The origin of this Vaishnavite sect is authoritatively said to have emerged in Kashmir and systematized by Rishi Shandilya

possibly in the 3rd century B.C. The Nilmat Purana also gives prominence to certain rituals which pertain to the doctrine of the Panchratra. Although its literal meaning is *five nights*, it does not convey any relevance to the doctrine itself. Most scholars define it as "five-fold nature of Vasudeva" as contained in Ahirbudnya Samhita. Bhagavatas or Panchratras belong to those sects who worship Lord Vishnu, variously called as Vasudeva or Narayana or Krishna. The distinctive appellation, *Panchratras* is derived from the title of the original work which contains the doctrine of this sect. Sandilya does not appear to be satisfied with the Vedas, because these, according to him, did not prompt sufficiently the way of supreme excellence and beautitude.

Panchratra pantheon/doctrine gives a cosmological basis to the myths of Vasudeva-Krishna by identifying him and his family with cosmic emanations: *Krishna, Subhadra* (Krishna's sister), *Shankersena* or *Balrama* (Krishna's brother), *Pradyumana* (Krishna's son) and *Aniruddha* (Krishna's grand-son). In Kashmir this doctrine appears to have developed some close relationship with Kashmir Shaivism and even appears to have some links with Tantric Buddhism.

According to Panchratra, Vasudeva or Vishnu is identified with *Bhagavata*, the supreme being. He is expressed as the first principle, omniscient, efficient and the material cause of the universe. It has given a cosmological basis to the myths of Vasudeva incarnating as Krishna. Vasudeva or Vishnu also stands for the ultimate personal god-head from whom, at the beginning of time, emanated Shankersena or Balrama as his manifestation (which is also identified with *Prakriti* or primal matter or *jiva*, the living soul). Therafter, emanated *Pradyumana* (Krishna's son) identified with *Manas* (mind) followed by *Aniruddha* (Krishna's grand-son and son of Pradyumana), representing *ahamkara* (self-conciousness or ego). Sankarsena, Pradyumana & Aniruddha, the three manifestations of the ultimate divine reality also represent

the personal gods in their own right. These gods are many and at, the same time, represent a single truth. The manifestation may be varied but there is one single reality; an eternal paradox. The jiva, on the one hand, is in union with the ultimate personal god, but, on the other, it is an individual also. The jiva retains its individuality even in complete salvation, so much so, that, while doing so, it realises the bliss of its union with Godhead.

The doctrine of Panchratra, though reconcilable on many points with Vedas, according to Shankara is at variance with them in some essential respects.

Kashmir Shaivism in comparative context and its impact

Kashmir Shaivism is a system which deals with the relationship between *God*, *soul* & *matter*; the three-fold principle arising out of the system of idealistic monism. However, due to passage of time and others factors, the original principle of idealistic monism somewhat changed towards dualistic and pluralistic interpretation of the ultimate reality.

It is Vasugupta (800-850 A.D.) who was mainly responsible for the restoration of the principle of idealistic monism and its three-fold aspect of relationship between God, soul & matter. The fundamental premise that pure consciousness is the spiritual substance of the universe is accepted by Kashmir Shaivism, Samkhya and Vedanta. However, Kashmir Shaivism differs from the other two systems in the interpretation of the three basic problems:

a) What is the nature of ultimate reality ?
b) What is the cause of its first movement ? and
c) What is the nature of its manifest form ?

Sankhaya postulates dualistic realities i.e Purusha (spirit) & Prakriti (materialization). Vedanta constructs a monistic system and introduces a principle of Maya, which is tainted with dualism. In answering the question as to what is the cause of its first movement, Sankhya says that it is due to association of Purusha & Prakriti. This, however, does not gives any reason for its initial movement. Vedanta postulates an additional category, Brahman, as the supreme lord, the intellegent agent who can set universal consciousness into motion. But this also does not explain the cause of its first movement.

Kashmir Shaivism constructs a pure monism which postulates a single reality with two aspects; one is transcendental (existence without limitations or abstraction) and the other is immanent (inherently God pervading). The former is beyond all manifestations and the latter pervades the universe of manifest phenomenon. But, both are real, for the effect cannot be different from the cause.

The world of matter is another form of consciousness. For Kashmir Shaivites salvation comes with an act of recognition or sudden enlightenment.

It further says that the consciousness eternally alternates between two phases, rest & action (i.e. transcendental & immanent); the former is the phase corresponding to the period of potentiality (i.e. *Pralaya*, the state of dissolution and reabsorption wherein all manifestations are dormant) and at the latter is a phase when the universal seeds of potentiality begin to germinate and consciousness begins to stir i.e. the universe is created or recreated. Each phase of action generates the seeds of potentiality which, while germinating during the period of rest, brings the next phase of action into being. The rhythm of consciousness of potentiality and action is without absolute beginning or end and the same is regulated by the law of *Karma* i.e. the law of cause & effect. Is that the nature of manifestation? Sankhya doctrine says that there are two independent realities; i.e. one of the spirit and other of the matter. The manifest world is appearance of unconscious

matter and the same is a separate and an independent reality. The Vedanta doctrine contends that there is only one ultimate reality which never changes and the manifest world is merely an appearance; an illusion (*Maya*).

Agama Shastra are mostly Sadhana Shastras. According to Kashmir Shaivism, Shiva (the ultimate reality), when He assumes limitation, is subject to Maya by his own *free will* whereupon, the subject-object relationship i.e. Purusha & Prakriti, comes into being. *Purusha* is the experient and *Prakriti* is the experienced. Prakriti differentiates into psychic apparatus, senses and matter. The psychic apparatus (*Antahkarna*) consists of asserting intelligence (*Buddhi*), I-consciousness-ego (*Ahamkara*) and mind (*Manas*). Shiva (the supreme consciousness i.e. the unchanging principle of all changes, and the ultimate reality), out of His own free will causes the manifestation of the universe. Thus, this supreme consciousness unfolds the universe upon its own screen. This universe becomes manifold due to differentiation of *experient* and the *experienced* (objects and things observed). The ultimate reality, i.e. Shiva, is not only universal consciousness but is also imbued with universal psychic energy or power i.e. the Shakti aspect which expresses itself through diverse principles (*Tatvas*) that govern the universe.

The evaluation of Tatvas, as applied to the doctrine of Shakti, in relation to the affirmation of the reality of the universe, also gives rise to devotion (*Bhakti*). Instance of common practises such as use of Mantra, Bija, Yantra, Mudra, Kundaliniyoga etc. and consecration of temples, icons and images are all related to Sadanas and Bhakti. It appears Panchratra doctrine of three limitations i.e. *Jiva, Manas* & *Ahamkara* has an indirect relationship to the Shaivite pantheon where Shiva is worshipped as a personal god by Shiva devotees.

Although the practice of Mantra, Yantra, Bija, Mudra etc. are all Tantric concepts derived from the Shiv Agama Shastra, the same has, in course of time, given rise to the Bhakti cult creating a Puranic Shiva

pantheon such as personal god, *Shankara*, and his consort *Parvati*, their son *Ganesha*, his consort *Vallabha* and another son *Kartikeya Kumara* or *Subramanya* or *Murugan*.

Shiva, Shankara or Maheshwara are brought on the pedastal of *Sakar Rupa* (concrete projection of an unmanifest supreme consciousness into manifest form) by the individual *Bhakta* (devotee) according to his own *Samaskaras* (upbringing and environment). He is a devotee who desires to worship any or all the Shiva emanations such as Parvati as Shakti, Ganesha as Adideva (first among the deities) and Kumara as the lord of war. They are all emanations of Lord Shiva but without any diminishing attributes. All are Shiva but each have different attributes and functions.

One is at once reminded of Vaishnavita Panchratra doctrine wherein the Vasudeva emanates into Sankersena (as Jiva), Pradyumana (as mind or manas) and Aniruddha (as Ahamkara or ego). It appears therefore, that the Panchratra doctrine has lent a devotional aspect to the Shaivism of Kashmir.

Table 6

The comparative basic principles of Samkhya, Vedanta and Kashmir Shaivism (Trika) philosophies are given as under in a tabulated form:

Salient Points	Samkhiya	Vedanta: (Shantabrah-mavada)	Trika: Kashmir Shaivasm
Ultimate Reality	Two independent realities: Purusha & Prakriti	Only one ultimate reality; Brahman. Cosmic evulution is due to operation of Maya i.e. world is an illusion; manifestation is unreal. Only Brahman is real.	Single ultimate reality having two aspects: (i) Transcendental (be-yond manifestation) (ii) Immanent (pervading the cosmos of manifest phenomena) 'Maaya' is Shiva's own Shakti and therefore real and, as such, Shiva and Shakti are both real.

Salient Points	Samkhiya	Vedanta: (Shantabrahmavada)	Trika: Kashmir Shaivasm
Jivaatma	Individual embodied (jiva) is only a manifestation of panchmahabutas. Purusha (universal soul) gets ensconced in prakriti (universal substance); breathes life into the matter. Activity belongs to Prakriti.	Empirical ego or jiva aatma is also inactive. All activity belongs to buddhi, the product of Prakriti.	In an individual Jiva is contracted universal consciousness (limited in conformity with the object of consciousness.)
Cosmic Evolution	Flowering of Purusha & Prakriti	The universe is unreal; an illusion. In liberation the universe is annulled.	Universe is real. In the mode of liberation, the universe is Shiva consciousness.

Mokshopaya or Yogavasishtha

One of the most valuable intellectual treasures, which India can boast about, is Mokshopaya or Yogavasishtha which is considered as a literary monument that contains about 32,000 shlokas. There have

been many Indian and Western scholars who have critically studied its text contained in various manuscripts available. The famous German Indologist, Helmuth Von Glasenapp (as quoted by Walter Slaje in his article, *The Mokshopaya Project* says, "this this is probably the greatest philosophical poetic work of all times."

The latest critical study of Mokshopaya has been carried out by Walter Slaje of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Vienna) in 1994. He observes that the manuscripts of the above mentioned work can be actually divided into two separate main strands. In his article published in "The Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune (1996)," he says:

"One of these is in terms of textual history, closely connected with the region of Kashmir, where, as is obvious by geographical, botanical and climatic as well as by historical references, the text must either have been produced or must at least have received its earliest shape that can still be recognized at present. The Kashmiri sources mention or quote the text by the title of *Mokshopaya* or *Mokshopaya Shastra*. This title is in tandem with the one in the oldest version of the text. Due to textual developments, the designation of *Maharamayana* occurs in more recent versions, but the title of *Yogavasishtha* is nowhere to be found."

Walter Slaje says that the title of *Yogavasishtha* is a very late one, but nonetheless, has become the name by which the work is generally known. He further adds:

"The strand under consideration is transmitted by a group of closely related manuscripts. The basic *(mula)* text is either commented upon by Bhaskara Kantha (Mokshopaya-Tika) or else left uncommented. According to the Kashmiri script, mainly though not exclusively used, I call this strand, by admittedly simplifying, the Sharda transmission or Kashmir version."

His critical study of various manuscripts have revealed that what is now known as *Yogavasishtha*, was actually titled *Mokshopaya* in Kashmir, the *mula* (original) text which was commented upon by the Kashmiri scholar, Bhaskara Kantha. The title *Yogavasishta* is found nowhere in the Sharda version. The former has been grouped as N (Nagri) and the latter as S (Sharda) by Slaje.

The second strand, according to Slaje, is a closely connected manuscripts, the version of which spread throughout India and to other countries in its *Nagri* form called the vulgate and given the title of *Yogavasishta.* Slaje further points out:

"As to the mere 'formal' differences, group N is characterized by an introductory frame-story unknown to group S, and by a dichotomy of the Nirvana-Prakarna (purva/uttaraardha) produced by a contamination with an abstract version of the Yogavasishtha, the so called Laghu-Yogavasishtha. Here again, the S group, which transmits the Nirvana Prakarna as a single and undivided one, demonstrably represents an earlier and therefore more original version."

Turning to the character of the variants of the vulgate, two types of changes with reference to the Kashmir version can be discriminated, scribal and other non-intentional mistakes on the one hand and willful modifications on the other.

Here we are concerned only with the important willful changes of the vulgate. The observations are:

1. Projection of the orthodox Brahminical touch.
2. Insertion of sargas- stressing Rama-bhakti, contrary to the spirit of the original.
3. Attempts to reinterpret passages that were originally conceived of

as anti-Vedic and anti-ritualistic.

4. The change or even complete deletion of Buddhist terms or text-pieces.

5. The deliberate changes in the text in terms of change of plural to singular forms of nouns and verbs in order to adapt them to later layers of the text, namely the dialogue between Vasishtha and Lord Rama.

6. While the original text does touch upon Advaita (monism), it essentially has nothing in common with the special features of Vedanta, but is very much in tune with the Lankavatara-Sutra of Mahayana and Gaudapada's Karikas. It appears that there is a deliberate attempt to Vedanticise the original text.

7. According to Walter Slaje, it was Vidyaranya who appears to have incorporated the Mokshopaya doctrine by reductions in his *Jivanmuktiviveka* of the so-called Yogavasishtha and his deliberate inclusion of the Vasishtha-Rama-Samvada into the corpus of the systematic Advaita Vedanta.

The Bhagvad Gita (The Kashmir Recension)

The Bhagvad Gita appears to have been subjected to many emendations. The existing version in vogue, throughout India and abroad, is known as the vulgate version. F. Otto Schrader of Kiel university, Germany, had carried out extensive research work on the Kashmir Recension of the Bhagvad Gita in 1930. He found out that its existing version (vulgate) had been subjected to modifications at many places when compared with its Kashmir Recension, the latter being, according to him, the original un-interrupted rendering. He has opined that the changes appear to have been made inadvertently in certain cases and intentionally in some. In the text of the original

Kashmir version the details of various major interpolations, deletions and additions are detailed hereunder:

Stanzas missing in the existing version (vulgate) but present in the Kashmir Recension

Table 7

Chapter	Missing Shloka numbers	Present in the Kashmir Recension
II	10 a (between 10 and 11)	*Sri Bhagavaan uvaaca* *Tvam manushyeno pahatantaratma vishadamoha bhi bhavad visamjnah /* *Kripaagrhitah samaveksya bandhun abhiprapannan mukham antaksya / /*
II	10 a (between 10 and 11)	*Ashcyaan anvashocas tvam prajnaavaadaam ca bhaashase (praajnavan naabhibhashase)* *Gatasun agataasumsh cha na anushocanti panditah /*
II	48 a (between 48 and 49)	*Yasya sarve samarambha nirashir bandhanas tv iha/ tyage yasya hutam sarvam sa tyagi so ca buddhimaan / /*
II	51	*Karmajam . . . manishinah janmaband-havinirmuktah (Karmabandhavinirmuktah) . . .padam gacchanty anamayam / /*
V	17 a (between 17 and 18)	*Smaranto pi muhus tv etat sprshanto pi svakarmani /* *Saktaa api na sajanti panke ravikaraa iva / /*

IX	6 a (between 6 and 7)	*Evam hi sarvabhuteshu caramy anubhilakshitah / Bhutaprakrtim aasthaya saha caiva vinaiva ca //*
	27 a (between 27 and 28)	*Nanarupaih purushuir yodhyamana vishanti te vaktramacintyarupam / Yaudhishthira Dhartarashtras ca yodhaah shastraih krttaa vividhaih sarva eva tvattejasaa vihataa nunam eva tathaa hime tvaccharira pravishtah //*
	44 a (between 44 and 45)	*Divyani karmani tavadbhutani purvani purva rshayah samuranti/ Nanyo sti karta jagatus tvam eko vidhata ca vibhur bhavash ca //*
	44 b	*Tavadbhutam kim nu bhavad asahyam kim vaa sakyam paratah kirtayishye / Kartasi sarvasya yatah svayam rai ribho tatah sarvam idam tvam eva //*
	44 c	*Atyadbhutam karma na dushkarma te karmopamanam na hi vidyate te / na te gunanam parimanam asti na tejaso naapi balasya narddheh //*
XII	16	*Anapekshah shucirdaksha udasino gatavyathah / sarvarambha parityagi... (phalatyagi)... yo madbhaktah sa me priyah //*

	17	*Yo na hrshyati na dvesti no shocati na kaankshti / Shubha ashubha parityagi... (phalatyaagi).... bhaktimaan yah sa me priyah //*
XIII	22	*Upadrashta numanta ca bharta bhokta maheshvarah' (karta ....)*
XIV	24	*samaduhkhasukha svasthah..........svapnah)*
	25	*Sarvarambha parityagi.......phalatyagi..*

Stanzas missing in the Kashmir Recension but present in the exisiting version

Table 8

Chapter	Missing Shloka numbers in the Kashmir Recension	Text in existing version (vulgate)
II	66	*Naasti buddhir ayuktasya na cayuktasya bhavana / Na cabhavayatah shantir- ashantasya kutah sukham //*
	67	*Indriyanam hi caratam caayuktasya yanmano-anuvidhiyate / Tadasya harati prajnaam vayurnavam iva ambhasi //*

Differences in interpretation of some of the shlokas found in the two versions

Table 9

Chapter	Shloka number	Existing version	Kashmiri recension
III	31	*Ye me matam idam nityam nutishthanti manavah / Shraddhavanto ansuyanto mucyante te-api karmabhih//*	*Ye me matam idam nityam anuvartanti manavah / Shraddhavanto ansuyanto mucyante sarvakilbishaih //*
IV	14	*Na maam karmani limpanti na me karmaphale shprha/*	*Na maam karmani limpanti na me kaamah phaleshv api /*
VI	28	*Yunjannaivam sadatmanam yogi vigatakalmasdah / Sukhena brahma-samsparsham atyan-tam sukham ashnute //*	*Yunjannaivam adaatmanam yogi niyatamaanasah / Sukhena brahmasamyogam atyantam adhigachati //*
VIII	22	*Purushah sa parah partha bhaktya labhyas tv ananyaya/ Yasyaantah sthani bhutani yena sarvam idam tatam // yasyantah sthani bhutani*	*Purushah sa parah partha bhaktya labhyas tv ananyaya/ Yam prapya na punar janma labhante yogino Arjuna / yatra sarvam pratisthitam //*

XVII	47	*Shreyaan svadharmo vigunah paradharmat svanushtitat / Svabhavaniyatam karma kurvan-na-pnoti kilbisham //*	*Shreyaan svadharmo vigunah paradharmaat svanushtitat/ Svadharme nidhanam shreyah paradharmodayad api/ svabhavaniyatam karma kurvan-na-pnoti kilbisham //*

On careful examination of the above mentioned comparative texts of the vulgate version and the Kashmir Recension, it is observed that there are a number of small and major variations which connote different interpretations of the basic message of the Gita. Now, the question arises, which of the two versions could be the text's original rendering. There are a number of scholars like F. Otto Schrader, Prof. Buhler and others who are of the opinion that the original rendering appears to be of the Kashmir Recension and many corruptions have crept in the vulgate version. Prior to 13^{th} century A.D., the great saints and scholars of Kashmir like Abhinavgupta, Bhata Kalatta, Ramakantha, Utpaladeva, Bhatabhaskara and others were following the Kashmir version of the Gita who regarded it to be the original rendering. It appears that the vulgate version must have entered Kashmir after Abhinavgupta's time (i.e. after 1015 A.D.). Otto Schrader, in the preface to his treatise, *The Kashmir Recension of Bhagvad -Gita*, says:

"It seems to me that, owing to the intrusion of the vulgate into Kashmir, the Kashmir Recension of the Gita must have fallen into disuse there about the time of the extinction of the Pratybhijna School, say in the fourteenth century".

He further states:

"The conclusion to be drawn from all this is that the vulgate of the Bhagvad Gita was still unknown in Kashmir by the end of the tenth century."

With regard to whether in the Kashmir Recension there are additions in the birch-bark MS (manuscript) as compared to vulgate or whether the former is the original rendering, Otto Schrader opines:

"A definite answer to this will perhaps not be possible without a minute examination of the Gita from the metrical point of view, for which I am not now prepared. But as a provisional reply to the first question, I venture to state that not one of the additional stanzas is unmistakably an interpolation, while in one or two cases, even the opportunity for an interpolation seems to be missing".

Schrader, after mentioning two classes of readings by which he infers that there are corruptions in the vulgate, treats the Kashmir Recension as the original reading. He states further:

"Thirdly, there is the rather numerous class of readings which appear to be original readings of the Gita preserved in K (The Kashmir Recension) but corrupted in V (vulgate)."

Schrader's research work regarding the Kashmir Recension of the Bhagvad Gita vis-a-vis the present day vulgate version does indicate, with some exceptions, that the Kashmir Recension in its entirety appears to be the original reading. Why, how and by whom have these corrupt emendations been made? Were they deliberate or inadvertent? In case the emendations were unintentional, the matter does not appear to be of much consequence except that it becomes an interesting project for Sanskrit scholars to bring out the corrected version. If the corruptions or interpolations are found intentional, then the whole matter attains an entirely different complexion. The

deliberate interpolations would suggest motives which need thorough scholastic investigations. However, a tentative hypothesis suggests that the overall motive behind such intentional interpolations may be due to the ideological biases of the perpetrators of the same.

In this connection, one of the hypotheses suggests that the original messages contained in some *Shlokas* (stanzas) of the Bhagvad Gita might be in unison with the Pratyabhijna philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism and at variance with Adi Shankracharaya's Vedanta. The Vedantists outside Kashmir therefore would have emended the concerned text by additions and alterations so that the text is in conformity with basic Vedantic ideology. The other hypothesis is that the changes may have been incorporated by some over-enthusiastic scholars to make the text in conformity with their own understanding of the overall message of the Gita. But it may be stated that, whatever the motive, the vulgate version appears to be not only erroneous but also contains, in some cases, illogical meanings.

As the author is not a Sanskrit scholar, the debate regarding the authenticity of the versions and the apparent contradictions therein gives rise to some relevant questions that can initiate further research in this direction. The whole process, covering almost the entire Gita, is a gigantic research task and it is best left for the scholars of the text to unravel the truth. The research work in this field assumes very great significance when one encounters as many as twelve Shlokas missing from chapters II to XVIII in the vulgate version of the Gita.

The author's purpose of pointing out certain discrepancies in the present day vulgate version of the Gita vis-à-vis the Kashmir Recension is to draw the attention of the readers to the fact that it is Kashmir alone which can really take pride in its ability to have retained, as far as possible, the supposed original rendering of the Gita in its pristine form, unpolluted and un-interpolated for thousands of years.

Buddhism and Kashmir Shaivism

If one were to visit Kashmir back in 1st century A.D., we would find it being ruled by the Kushans (namely Kings Kanishka and Huska) with Buddhism at its zenith. Nagarjuna, the famous Buddhist philosopher, was then the highest religious authority in Kashmir. His dialectic analysis of the Mahayana doctrine as contained in the Madhyamika school of Sarvastivadins was so incisive and profound that it changed the whole complexion of Buddhist thought.

Nagarjuna, by his meticulous logic gave birth to "absolute relativism," i.e. the Doctrine of Void, which the Russian scholar Scherbatsky has termed as the "Doctrine of Relativity." The Doctrine of Void or "Shunyavada" has been termed as a form of nihilism from the standpoint of academic philosophy.

According to these Buddhists, the universe was believed to be a flux of momentary but interdependent events. But Nagarjuna logically demonstrated that, in the final analysis, the cosmic flux was not real and the consciousness which perceived it, was itself part of the flux. This ipso-facto means that Samsara does not really exist. He also came to the conclusion that if the world of change was not real, Nirvana was also unreal, and therefore, there was no difference between Samsara and Nirvana. This further means that if all things were equally not real, then they were one and the same in the ultimate analysis. The only real existence would be that of what was termed by Nagarjuna as "emptiness" or "the void".

However, this apparent nihilistic doctrine did not lead Nagarjuna to agnosticism, because though the void was real, the world and all that it containd had a practical reality. The universe was thus a great void and the body, its essence, was the primordial Buddha i.e. Nirvana. Madhyamikas aver that the life of the world is the same as Nirvana and really there is no difference between them at all.

The followers of Yogacara maintained an idealistic view viz. the world was pure consciousness and had no reality of its own and thus it was referred to as *Tathata* (thatness), which implies that the world is without any definitions of thought; distinct from the abstract and non-conceptual in nature. This idealism is equivalent to Nagarjuna's *void.*

In the history of the "Great Vehicle," the feminine conception of distinctness also found its way into the pantheon. The personification of the qualities of the Bodhisattva such as Prajnaparmita (i.e. perfection of insight) became the Shakti aspect which symbolized force, action, potency etc.

The new teaching with magical powers became known as *Vajrayana* (*the vehicle of the thunderbolt*). The divinities of the new sect became known as *Taras,* the spouses of Buddhas or the Bodhisattvas.

Lesser divinities are known as *Matangis, Pisachas, Yoginis and Dakinis.* These also attained many arms like the deities of the Brahmins, such as Durga, Kali etc, Textbooks for the practices to be employed (*Sadhan*) are known as *Tantras.* The right formula for worship is known as *Mantras* and the right symbolism is reffered to as the *Yantra.* This is called Tantric Buddhism and, while being close to Shaivic Tantricism, it can be posited that the latter must have had a great influence on the former.

There are clear indications in the annals of Kashmir's history that the Madhyamika doctrine of Buddhism, being the intermediate between the inflexible realism of Sarastivadins and the idealism of Yogacara, was propounded by Nagarjuna after he came under the influence of Kashmir's Shaivic theology. Although the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism (*Pratyabhijna)* came into the limelight only in the early ninth century A.D., after it was developed by Somananda and Utpala, the basic elements of its Doctrine of Recognition might have developed their seeds much earlier. There appears to be no doubt that the

philosophy of the Doctrine of Void as propounded by Nagarjuna was greatly influenced by Shaivic thought. Kashmir Shaivism, therefore, appears to have influenced the shaping of the precepts of the doctrines of Madhyamika of Nagarjuna, Yogyakarta, Tantric Buddhism and Zen Buddhism.

Intrinsically, there is not much difference between the Doctrine of Recognition of Kashmir Shaivism and the Doctrine of Void of the Madhyamikas.The Doctrine of Void or emptiness states that Samsara is Nirvana because the void itself is Nirvana. In Shaivite terminology, in the ultimate analysis, Nirvana is Shiva. The only difference is that Nagarjuna's Nirvana is apparently a nullity, a vacuity, a non-being while Kashmir Shaivism maintains that the positions taken by various systems of philosophy are only various roles assumed by the universal consciousness. The Doctrine of Void of the Madhyamikas says that the perceiving consciousness is also unreal and so is the cosmic flux. The world of change, according to this Doctrine, is unreal and so is Nirvana and the idea of Samsara. But, the Shaivic Doctrine of Recognition says that what appears to be unreal, a void or a nullity is actually a positive conception of the ultimate principle rather than a negative one. This 'body of the essence' or Nirvana or Samsara is nothing but the concept of Shiva of the Pratyabhijna.

Allan Watts in his book, *The Way of Zen*, while discussing Nagarjuna's Doctrine of Void, has this to say:

"From the standpoint of academic philosophy, the Prajnaparamita and the doctrine of Nagarjuna are no doubt some form of Nihilism or Absolute Relativism. But this is not Nagarjuna's standpoint. The dialectic with which he demolishes every conception of reality is merely a device for breaking the vicious circle of grasping and the terminus of his Nihilism is the natural and uncontrived bliss (*Ananda*) of liberation."

However, Nagarjuna demolishes even unconscious premises of thought and action until the very depths of the mind are reduced to total silence and even the idea of voidness is itself to be avoided.

On the other hand, Kashmir's Shaivites call this Doctrine of Void an eternal paradox without any attributes and this stage of total silence is nothing but Paramashiva; the changeless principle of manifestation leading to eternal bliss. Madhyamikas say that the final bliss is here and now for all who can perceive it and it is not something remote. To this, Kashmir's Shaivites respond by saying that the individual self (Jiva) is Shiva (the ultimate essence) even though that self has forgotten his real nature. Once he recognizes his real nature, he will achieve bliss. When he is able to recognize that he is none other than Shiva or the ultimate principle (a position that has nothing in common with the special features of Vedanta), he is very much in tune with the Lankavatara-Sutra of Mahayana and Gaudapada's Karikas. In such a state he will attain, what Buddhists would call, the *Void* or *Nirvana*. This bliss would be the one arising from spontaneous merger with the eternal.

Zen Buddhism and Trika

Zen Buddhism or simply Zen [derived from Sanskrit *Gyan* (knowledge) which became *Gyen* and finally *Zen* in Chinese] is a view of life; a way of liberation which has its origin in Chinese Taoism and the principles of Buddhism. Zen thoughts spread to China, Japan and other neighboring countries sometime between the 11th and 12th century A.D. Zen can be considered to be the flowering of two great cultural traditions; the Chinese and the Indian. It is a fruition of the wisdom of both these oriental cultures. It established its roots deeply and creatively in Japanese culture too.

Madhyamika, Sarvastivadin and Yogacara (as Buddhist influences on Chinese Tao) gave rise to Zen Buddhism. Zen is a metamorphosis of Buddhist thoughts of the 'Great Vehicle' containing strains of Kashmir Shaivism and the Tao way of life.

What are the principles of Tao? According to Lao-Izu, eternal Tao cannot be spoken of. It is the way of life rather than a permanent method of spirituality. He further states that "there was something vague before heaven and earth arose. How calm! How void! It stands alone, unchanging, it acts everywhere, untiring. It may be considered the mother of everything under heaven. I do not know its name, but call it by the word Tao". The universe grows, it is not made. Tao's principle is spontaneity, but not disorderly or blind. The important aspect of Tao is that the individual is supposed to be like a mirror, grasping nothing, refusing nothing, merely trying to reflect all that exists within and outside him. He receives but does not keep. Cut out cleverness and there will be no anxieties. The idea of Tao is not to reduce the human mind to a moronic vacuity but to bring into play its innate and spontaneous intelligence by using it without forcing it. The spontaneity of Tao and the total silence of the Madhyamika of Nagarjuna gave rise to Zen. According to Zen, truth cannot be put into words. Those who know do not speak and those who speak do not know.

In Zen perspective 'awakening' is just natural, without effort, spontaneous and; obviously, it may occur at any time. It will be a spontaneous direction to the Truth. It does not require any symbolism in action or words. Immediate 'awakening' is Zen. The doctrine of Zen suggests six percepts, namely: no thought, no influence, no analysis, no cultivation, no intention and letting a thing settle by itself.

One Tantric work parallel to Zen states:

If it (the Truth) is already manifest what is the use of meditation. And if it is hidden, one is just measuring darkness.

Religious/Cultural Symbiosis (Kashmiryat)

Sir John Marshall says, "Amongst the many revelations that Mohenjo-daro and Harappa have had in store for us, none perhaps is more remarkable than the discovery that Shaivism had a history going back to the Chalcolithic age or perhaps even further still".

It appears that the two cultures; Shaivic and the Vedic, continued to flourish in a syncretic way for a long time. Eventually the two cultures appear to have merged with each other giving rise to a common ethos which reflected in the mosaic of the early stages of Nilmata Culture when the Brahmins of the Vedic tribes were allowed to continue to live in the Valley on permanent basis by the Nagas. This culture mostly laid emphasis on the worship of the Naga and Pisacha deities in addition to worship of Vishnu, the sun and the moon. The Vishnu cult, however, remained supreme. Later on, Rudra of the Vedas was replaced by Shiva (not to be confused with primordial Shaivism or with the ancient Shiv-Shakti tradition already prevalent in the Valley) and introduced in the Nilmat tradition alongwith the cult of Mother goddess.

The advent of Mahayana Buddhism in Kashmir actually took roots during Asoka's rule, although minor infiltration had started about 150 years before Ashoka. It reached its zenith during the Kushans rule in the form of Sarvastivadin Buddhism. It was but natural for Buddhist doctrines to have an impact on the traditional Nilmat culture. Because of the tremendous influence of Sarvastivadin Buddhism in Kashmir during Kanishka's reign, it was given a high pedestal in the Nilmat pantheon. Buddha was given a status of an Avatar.

Thus, one can see that Kashmir, having had developed a penchant for religious and cultural assimilation, naturally gave birth to a great tradition of religious symbiosis which persisted even after the advent

of Islam in the Valley and which, in the later-day terminology, came to be known as *Kashmiryat.*

Prevailing Reshe Order and `Islam, as practiced in Kashmir'

In the background of the unique syncretic culture and ethos of assimilation (Kashmiryat), already extant since long before the advent of Islam in Kashmir, is it surprising that this Kashmiryat which, by its intrinsic nature was prone to impart its embellishments to all incoming doctrines, gradually leant its mark to Islam and, in the course of its assimilation, imparted a new idiom to its elements on its journey from Arabia to Persia and then to Kashmir? Here Islam, through its active dissemination among the masses at the hands the Reshes (mystics of saintly disposition indigenous to the Valley), gained rapid acceptance amidst a society, the edifice of which had started gradually cracking after the end of Avantiverman's rule.

Torn by social inequities, many inhabitants of the Valley gradually accepted Islam, especially because its advent, through the likes of Bulbul Shah (who visited the Valley during the reign of Sehadeva (1301 to 1320 A.D.) followed by Hazrat Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani (visiting in 1313/14 A.D.), made a lasting impact on the existing Reshe tradition in the Valley. The fruition of Islam on a large scale in Kashmir came to be epitomized by Hazrat Nuruddin Nurani (1356-1440), commonly known as Nund Resh. Triggered by his interactions with Mir Muhammad Hamdani (son of Mir Sayyed Ali Hamdani), Nund Resh was instrumental in presenting Islam amidst the common masses by using ways and means that were synchronous with the current Shiv-Shakti and other pre-Islamic traditions. This finally took the form of a mass movement, and, in effect, proved to be a great vehicle for the spread of Islam in the Valley. It is difficult to comprehend as to whether Islam could have had such impact without

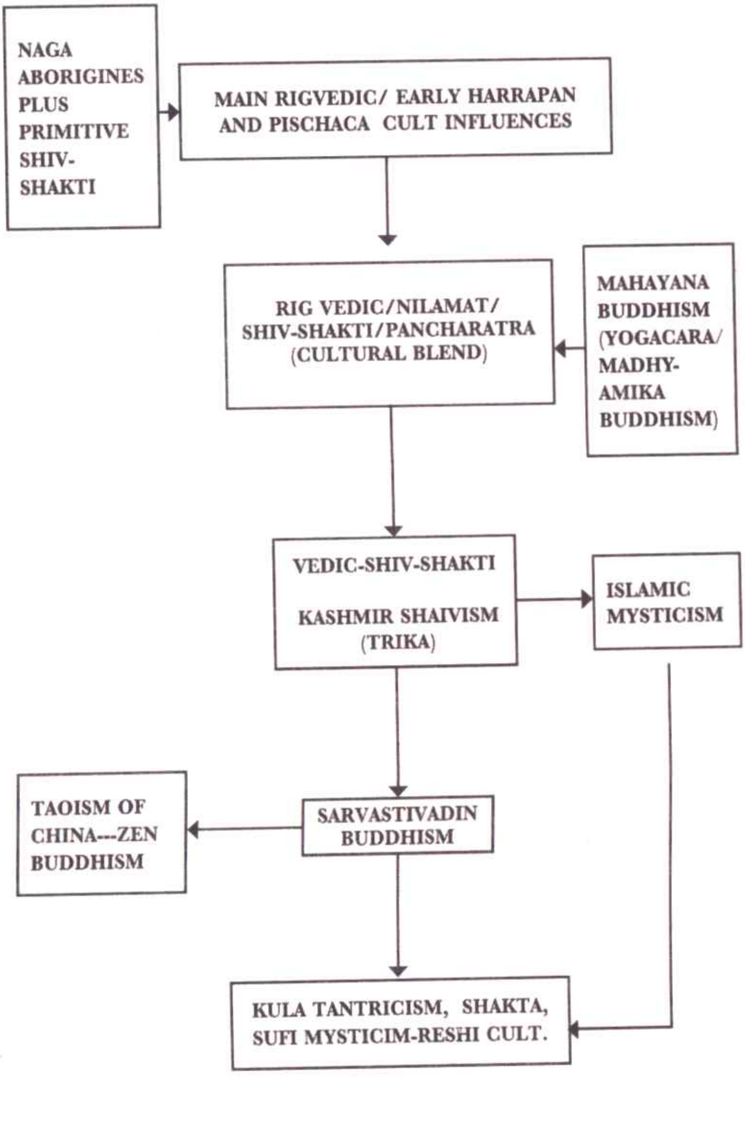
adopting the resilience lent to it by the existing spiritual traditions of Kashmir. For example, Bulbul Shah, apparently deviated from orthodox practices of Islam by introducing the congregational chanting of litanies in praise of God and the Prophet before every prayer in a mosque. These are called *Aurad-i-fathiyya* which resemble the chanting of mantras and hymns by Kashmiri Pandits.

The Reshes, as such, in the course of dwelling upon pre-Islamic traditions, while being always focused on the transcendental, omnipresent and omniscient almighty God, involved themselves in various austerities which, among other practices, included living in forests and caves, being on strict vegetarian diet with intent of not harming any living being, transgressing all material and physical desires and observing chastity by remaining unmarried.

Sufferings of Kashmirs Inflicted by Invading Zealots

The great vision of the Reshes to invigorate the Kashmiri society with an egalitarian dynamism was, however, subsequently blown to pieces by the killings, looting and destruction unleashed by the invading zealots from outside the Valley who, in the name of Islam, inflicted immense sufferings and installed fear, not only upon the Kashmiri Pandits, but also amidst the Kashmiri Muslims in many gross and subtle ways.

Evolution of Religious Traditions in Kashmir



Some Landmarks, to name a few

How vast was the field of enquiry and how important were the un-resolved questions which required indigenous research about Kashmir's past contribution to Indian civilization, can be judged from the following extremely important facts.

Aesthetics in Natyashastra

The contribution by the great savants and scholars of Kashmir has not been restricted to the realm of literature, philosophy and astrology only, but also has been extensive in dance, drama, rhetoric and aesthetics. The great sage and Shaivite philosopher of Kashmir, Abhinavgupta (950-1000 A.D.) wrote a work called *Abhinavbharati* on the Natya Shastra (treatise on drama) in which he propounded a theory of aesthetics in the context of drama, which is an inalienable part of modern-day Bharat-Natyam school of dancing.

Vedanga Jyotisha (mathematical astronomy)

It was Lagadha, a Kashmiri astrologer, who evolved an astronomical system of framing a calendar according to lunar cycle as early as 1500 B.C. The earliest reference to Vedanga Jyotisha recensions is discernable in Rigveda and Yajurveda, wherein rules for calculating the positions of the sun and the moon among the Nakshatras have been indicated. Lagadha evolved a system of five-year cycle in which a solar year is taken to be of 366 days (1830 days for five years) and five lunar years to be of 62 months. The two months difference between the Solar and Lunar five-year cycle [the year initially starting from the same nakshatra Dhanishta on the first day of the bright half of the lunar month of *Magha* (January-Febuary] was adjusted by adding one month after every two and half years of the five-year cycle to the Lunar calendar. These added months are known as

inter-calary months (*Malamas-Bhanumas*). However, due to precession of equinoxes, the point of northerly track of the sun and the moon (*uttarayana*) has receded back upto the time when the reckoning of the first month was changed to the 1st day of the bright-half of the lunar month of *Chaitra* (March-April), i.e *Chaitra Shukla Pratipada,* sometime in 1st century B.C. It may be noted that Lagadha's system was entirely based on 27 *Nakshatras* (i.e. 27 constellations through which the moon traverses during the lunar month) and it appears that the system of *Rashis* (12 major zodiacal divisions representing 12 solar months) was not in vogue during Rigvedic/Yajurvedic and Lagadha's time. The Rashi methodology appears to have been brought into the Indian astronomical system sometime during Atharveda period (1400-800 B.C.).

However, Lagadha's system was modified after the present day system of Siddhanta came into vogue, before 800 B.C.

It will be interesting to note that according to the present day Kashmiri *panchang* (almanac), the lunar months begin with *Krishna Pakhsha* [dark lunar half on its *pratipada* (1st day)] followed by *Shukla Pakhsha* (bright lunar half). However, it is the other way round (i.e. beginning with Shukla Paksha followed by Krishna Paksha) in the rest of the sub-continent.

Why and how this difference has crept in is not known. The concerned astrologers (*Jyotishis*) may be able to throw some light on this discrepancy. But, one thing is certain that this variation is responsible for causing lot of confusion among the people who follow the *Kashmiri* almanac, especially after the exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley in the year 1990. In this connection, on perusal of the Nilmat Purana, it can be clearly deduced that the system beginning a lunar month with *Shukla Pakhsha* (bright lunar-half) was in vogue in Kashmir as elsewhere in India. How, why and when this system has

been modified is not clear at all. However, the New Year starts with *Chaitra* (March-April) *Shukla* (bright lunar half) *Pratipada* (1^{st} day) in Kashmir as elsewhere in the sub-continent.

Intellectual firmament of Kashmir (6th to 11th Centuary A.D.)

Mr. K. M Panikar says, "Thus at least till the Muslim conquest of the valley, Kashmir could claim to have been in the vanguard of Indian culture with notable contributions to every aspect of Indian life." In his Foreword to Dr. S. C. Ray's, *History of Kashmir,* he maintains that the names of Somadeva, Kshemendra, Damodaragupta, Bilhana and Kalhana stand out as a brilliant galaxy of geniuses adding lustre to the history of Sanskrit literature in Kashmir.

Dr. S. C Ray draws attention to the point that Rajtarangni makes a mention of Matrgupta who ruled Kashmir for a while. It is stated that he was poet and a contemporary of Pravarasena II (A.D. 580) of Kashmir and Vikramaditya and Harsha of Ujjayni (6^{th} Century A.D.). Some scholars have endeavoured to prove his identity with the great Kalidasa. According to tradition, Kalidasa is stated to have written a poem called, *Setukavya* in Prakrit at the request of Pravarasena, who is said to have constructed a bridge-of-boats. It has been opined that Matrgupta (under the pseudonym of Kalidasa), in fact, wrote this poem. Further, among other reasons given by these scholars who support this view in respect of Kalidasa, it is also stated that verse No.252 in Book III of the Rajtarangni, the composition of which is ascribed by Kalhana to Matrugupta, is very similar to verse No.113 of *Meghduta,* which is one of the most illustrious literary work of Kalidasa in that it conveys the same meaning as that of verse No. 252. However, there are other scholars who do not agree with this view.

Matrugupta also wrote a commentary on Bharat's Natyashashtra which is referred to in Sundra Misra's Natyapradipa. Kshemendra quotes the opinion of Matrugupta in one of his works. Some of the verses attributed to Matrugupta have also found place in Vallabhadeva's anthology. Chandragomin, the founder of Candra school of Sanskrit Grammar, was from Kashmir. As per Kalhana, Chandracarya revived the study of Mahabhashya and composed his own grammar during the reign of King Abhimanyu.

Vasugupta, the great teacher of Kashmir Shaivism, was followed by his disciples Bhatta Kallata (825-875 A.D.) who wrote *Spandasarvasva* and *Spandakarikas. Spandakaryakas* as an exposition on the work of Vasugupta. His two other books, *Tatwartha-Chintamani* and *Madhuvahini*, both commentaries on *Shivasutras*, are said to be lost.

Bhattakallata was followed by Somnanda (875-925 A.D.) who wrote *Shivdrusht*i and its *Vrtti* (commentary) which is a philosophical treatise in support of Vasugupta's teachings. Somananda's pupil, Utpala was the author of as many as six works such as *Pratyabhijnakarikas*, *Vrtti* (a commentary on it), a *Tika* (addition thereon), *Ishvara-siddhi*, *Ajadapramatr-siddhi* and *Stotravali*. *Subhasitavali* is an anthology of verses complied from the writings of various poets of ancient India, and particularly of Kashmir. Kalhana mentions Damodaragupta (who wrote *Kuttanimata Kavya*, a practical treatise on erotica), Manoratha, Sankhadatta, Cataka and Samdhimat as the leading poets who flourished in the court of Jayapida. Bhamaha's *Kavyalamkara* is the earliest work on poetics in Sanskrit which has been discovered so far. It is also indicated that Bhamaha also wrote a book on metrics.

In the period strething across from 815 to 900 A.D. Muktakana, Shivasvamin, Anandavardhana and Ratnakara, turned out to be

among the leading poets of Kashmir. They obtained great repute during the reign of Avantiverman (855 to 863 A. D.). The fame of Anandavardhana rests mainly on his treatise on the science of poetics. *Dhvanyaloka, Kavyaloka* or *Sahrdayaloka* are among his greatest works. Besides Sanskrit, he composed several poems in Prakrit.

Abhinavagupta

Abhinavagupta was born between 950-960 A.D. in a reputed Brahmin family. His father was known as Narasimhagupta and his grandfather as Varahagupta. In his childhood he is stated to have faced the situation of facing his mother's death followed by his father renunciating the world. In his quest for learning, he travelled over various parts of Kashmir and visited many places outside the Valley. Bhattenduraja, Lakshmangupta and Bhatta Tauta were among his teachers. He became one of the most famous personalities who stands brightly in the intellectual firmament of Kashmir. He was a poet, critic, philosopher and a saint, all-in-one. He is known to have written as many as forty-one books, some of which exist, while several are known only by name. He also wrote profusely on aesthetics. Mr. P. N. K. Bamzai says, "Like a drama moving to its climax, aesthetic thought in Kashmir moved to its highest pitch in the writings of Abhinavagupta, undoubtedly the greatest figure in the history of Indian aesthetics." In his second phase he studied the school of poetics and produced his famous work on aesthetics known as *Abhinavabharati.* He wrote *Locana,* an extremely profound and difficult commentary on Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka. Natyalocana* and *Abhinavabharati* are his commentaries on Bharata's *Natyashashtra* (Dramatics). He studied Tantrik texts from the view of Kashmir Shaivism which resulted in his famous work, *Tantraloka* and *Trantrasara.* In the third phase, he was drawn towards metaphysical matters which resulted in formulations that took Kashmir Shaivism to its highest level by securing for it a permanent place in the history

of human thought. On this subject he wrote, *Pratyabhijnavimarshini, Pratyabhijnavivrti Vimharshni, Para-Trimshikavivarana* and *Shiva-Drshtyalocna.* His works, other than those related to his expositions on Kashmir Shaivism, include *Bhairavasastotra, Paramarthsara, Milinivijayavarttika. Bhairavastotra, Mohopadesavimsati, Kramastotra* and *Ghatakarparavivrti.*

G.T. Deshpande in his book *Abhinavagupta* says, "It is a traditional belief both among Kashmiri Pandits and also among old Muslim families of Kashmir that when Abhinavagupta felt that he had completed the mission of his life, he along with disciples one day visited the Bhairava Cave (modern Bhairava Cave), in the Himalayas. On his way he was reciting the *Bahirava Statva* which he had himself composed in the earlier period of his literary activity. And there, leaving his disciples behind, Abhinava entered that cave never to return.



Abhinavagupta

Other Luminaries

Mamattacharya, was Abhinavgupta's disciple who also made considerable contribution to poetics. Mamattacharya's famous work *Kavyaprakash* is said possess such merit that it has been commented upon by more than seventy ancient and modern scholars.

Panikar opined that Somadeva's *Kathasaritsagara,* one of the undisputed masterpieces of the world, may well be claimed to the epic of the middle classes, a unique work which almost compensates us for the loss of the legendry work of Gunadhya's *Brihatkatha.* It has reached the remotest corners of the world in one form or the other. Somedeva is supposed to have written this work for the edification of queen Suryamati, the wife of King Ananta (1028-63 A.D). It is stated to be the largest collection of stories in the world considering that the number of stanzas of the work alone are more than 22,000. It is twice as big as the Iliad and Odyssey put together.

Kshemendra was perhaps the most comprehensive minds of his time who wandered into every field, including satire, with distinction. He introduced social satire, mixed with humour and sarcasm. His *Samayamtrika* is a poem of eight chapters which narrates the story of the wanderings of a courtesan in the Valley. It is stated to be an interesting specimen of satire rarely found in Sanskrit literature on strolling musicians, women beggars, shop-girls, saints, thieves and other classes of people. His other works include *Kalavilasa* (depicting various occupations and follies of the people of his times, such as physicians, traders, astrologers, goldsmiths, harlots, and saints), *Darpadalama* (a writing in which he condemns pride, which is said to spring from birth in a good and a rich family, wealth, learning, beauty, valour, charity, and asceticism) and *Desopadesa* (which exposes all kinds of sham in society through caricatures of the life of various

depraved sections of the community, such as cheats, misers, prostitutes and others).

Mahimabhatta, the rhetorician in his work *Vyakitiviveka*, controverted the *Dhvani* theory of Abhinavaupta. However, Mahimabhatta's attempt to kill this theory apparently failed as it was unable to convince the later writers. Mahimabhatta, also wrote *Tattvoktikosa*, in which he discussed the nature of talent and creativity (Pratibha).

Panini's monumental work on Sanskrit grammar, *Ashtadhyayi* became the object of special study by Kashmiri scholars. Mr. P. N. K. Bamzai states that one of the most outstanding contributions of Kashmir to the cultural heritage of India has been the development of Sanskrit language and literature. One of the most important contributions to Sanskrit grammar is the *Mahabasa*, a commentary written in the second century B.C. by Patanjali, a Kashmiri grammarian. According to Kashmiri tradition, upheld by many, he was born in the village known as Godra in the south of the Valley. Mr. Bamzai says that the Kashmiris were keen to remain masters of Sanskrit grammar. This is indicated by the number of works authored by them on this subject. *Chandravyakarna*, is a work on the basis of which the school of Sanskrit grammar called *Candra*, next in importance to that of Panini, was founded by Chandracarya. Another commentary on Panini's work, *Kasikavriti* was jointly written by Jayadata and Vamana, two Brahmin grammarians mentioned by I-tsing in the seventh century A.D.

In prosody and metrics, Kashmiri authors have made valuable contributions to Sanskrit language and literature. Pinglacharya, who authored *Pingala*, a well-known work on Metrics, was a Kashmiri and so was Kedar Bhatta who wrote *Vrittaratnakara*. Another well known work on Metrics, *Suvritta-tilaka* was also written by Kshemendra. Mamatta, his later contemporary, wrote a book titled

Savdavyaparacaraca. In the field of Lexicography too the contribution of Kashmiris is considerable. The *Anekarthakosa* of Mankha is of special importance and is an improvement on works of preceding authors like Amarasimha Chandragomin on this subject.

These scholars are not only among the most prominent ones in Kashmir, but are well known in the rest of India and abroad for their contribution in the realm of literature, theology and philosophy. During Avantiverman's time (855-883 A.D.), there were a number of luminaries who were all Kashmiris, such as: Anandavardana, Bhatta Kallata, Ratnakara, Muktakana Somananda and others.

What is mentioned above is only illustrative of the luminaries who sparkled so very brightly in the intellectual and literary spectrum of Kashmir during the period of 6^{th} to 11^{th} century A.D. which of course does not include the name and achievements of all other personalities who thronged the Valley in its period of great ascent.

Lal Dyed

She was saint and poet, both together. This is a very rare combination. Lalleshwari, who came to be popularly known as Lal Dyed and who lived in the 14^{th} century Kashmir, is rightly considered as the founder of *Kashmiri* poetry. She commanded great respect among all the communities of Kashmir. Shafi Shauk, in his essay on Lal Dyed's poetry, says, "Only a hazy biography is possible out of the wooly legends rife with the weird tales that have accumulated around her name with the course of time. She was born in a small hamlet called Sympore (near Pampore) in or around 1325 A.D. Some scholars say that she was born at Pandrethan. Her father viz. Tsondri Bhat, a landlord of Khonmoh, sent her for education in Sanskrit and Trika under tutelage of the famous scholar of the times, Sidha Mol or Shrikantha who was a saint of many endowments... Her education was

seriously hampered when, in conformity with the custom of the time, she was married in her tender age. Her husband, an illiterate country yokel, did not understand her disposition and spiritual endowment and maltreated her in all possible ways. The Legend says that her mother-in-law, too, was a cruel woman who tormented her all the time. She finally renounced her house and hearth and roamed from village to village in a negligee, interacted with people and, in order to initiate them in matters of spiritualism and assuage their suffering, recited her verses to them. Wherever she went, people of all strata thronged around her and consigned her verses to their memory."

He further says, "Lal Dyed was a great visionary as she could concretize even the most intricate states of mind in the form of consistent images. Without making arbitrary statements, she creates verbal images that stimulates a reader's intellectual and emotional faculties and transport him to an unknown realms where his own discoveries acquire significance… Ambiguity in her verse is not an ornament, it is partly due to thematic complexity and partly due to transformation that the Kashmiri language has undergone since the 14th century... In articulating the ordeals of the spiritual journey, encounters with hurdles, and the final re-union with the ultimate, Lal Dyed employs all her visionary powers. In all her symbols, metaphors similes and paradoxes, the visual image is the foreground of the emotional state. Each vaakh (an expression in verse) of Lal Dyed is a short poem that is pivoted on a brilliant image.

She consciously curtails all superfluous details to attend such a concentration as leaves the reader not subservient to the poet's own attitude to things, but finds his stimulated reflection free to probe, consider and achieve thoughtful delight."

Constructing upon the Nilmat culture and tradition of the Valley, she was the greatest protagonist of humanism and, in fact, the first

to articulate of a syncretic religious doctrine on a plebeian platform which later paved the way in further developing the idea of what is today known and understood as *Kashmiriyat.* She, instead of speaking in Sanskrit, the medium of the elite, spoke her heart out in Kashmiri, the language of the common masses.

Nund Resh and 'Islam, as practiced in Kashmir'

Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali (popularly known as Nund Resh) was born in 1377 A.D. at the village of Khonmuh in Kashmir. His father had recently converted to Islam. Being disposed to a spiritual outlook since an early age, he quickly imbibed the prevailing spiritual practices of the Reshi order in the Valley. He renounced the world at the age of thirty-two by retiring to caves in the mountains and performing many ascetic practices. Thereafter, prompted by his doctrinal interactions with Mir Muhammad Hamdani, he set upon a path of transforming the existing Rishi movement into a vehicle for reforming the existing social order of the Valley which, in effect, lead to the rapid spread of Islam, as practiced in Kashmir. He did not approve of renunciation of the mundane world. This to him was an act of cowardice. He propounded that a true Rishi ought to actively participate in the roles given to him by his Society. He advanced the causes of the poor and the downtrodden by promoting social justice, based on the recognition of the equality of all humans in the eyes of the Almighty God. Through his cryptic poetic compositions in Kashmiri, in the language of the commons instead of Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian (which was the lingua franca of the elite), employing the use of pastoral symbols and images, he launched a tirade against the oppressive measures of the Brahmins and the coteries attached to the royal court. He also came heavily against the rigmaroles of religious rituals. His crusade against prevailing social wrongs actually paved the way to a wide range of conversions to Islam. While as the Brahmins and the scholars of Islam

looked down upon the Kashmiri language as crude and inappropriate in contrast to Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian, he preached in the tongue (Kashmiri) and the idiom of the common folks.

The Ancient Treasury goes into oblivion

The ancient treasury of what has been summarily mentioned above, like the giant temples of the Valley that were subsequently raised to the ground, faded into oblivion and remained buried ever since. In a matter of a few centuries the luminous antecedents of the Valley fell into the dark recesses of the ignorance of people that inhabited it. It appears that the Kashmiris, after 1340 A.D., perhaps due to compulsions of history, gradually lost their connection with the glorious and vibrant spirit of what the Valley had once been. Their self-esteem touched such a low that, ironically, there came a time when they disdained most in all that was indigenous and sought to take refuge in things that were alien. However, at the onset of the Dogra rule, while as their insecurities did abate, they were unable to reconnect with their past legacies which had got buried under the debris of the holocaust caused by foreign marauders. One is really pained to note that whatever information we have about Kashmir, its peoples and their achievements have been supplied by outsiders like M.A. Stein, Lawrence, Prof. Buhler, Grierson and many others from the sub-continent, who, by their dedicated hard work and sincerity, have made remarkable efforts to retrieve a little from all that had been lost. In so far as the Kashmiri Pandits are concerned, it appears that the rot must have started right from their return into the Valley during Badshah's rule when elders of the time had socially segregated themselves into *Karkuns* (employees) and *Goars* (Gurus or Goars /Priests) even though, to begin with, all of them were Saraswat Brahmins. In the process the so called *Karkuns* developed an air of superiority over the Goars, probably because the former started getting administration

jobs in the State and latter were dependent on what the *Karkuns* would condescend to part away with for the priest-services which the Goars were offering. In consequence, their brothers (*bouys*), who were asked to attend to religious rites, learning and spiritual pursuits, were looked down upon so much that they got segregated socially and were treated as a separate caste in so for as marital relations with the *Karkuns* were concerned. The very odium of deliberately creating a class consciousness was reprehensible and is a blot on the face of the Kashmiri Pandit community. The social segregation also reflected adversely on the *dharmic* (religious) obligations of the Karkuns who remained cut off from the real essence of such religious or spiritual practices in that they assumed that same could be carried out or observed by their brother Gurus or Goars by acting as their proxies for conducting religious rites. Hence the Karkuns remained and continued to remain somewhat isolated from their study and practice of basic religious and other dharmic traditions which, unlike their ancestors, resulted in the lack of interest in research and study of languages, particularly Sanskrit, in addition to subjects such as art, literature, philosophy and other related fields. The dichotomy of Karkuns and Goars so created also adversely affected the lot of the Gurus, as well, considering that the economic condition of Goars remained always precarious in that they were entirely dependent on the Karkuns for their sustenance. This was the probable precursor to the apartheid practiced by the Karkuns towards the Gurus (Goars). Therefore, it is no wonder that the *Guruji* institution itself dwindled since they were, as such, forced to pursue avocations like that of the Karkuns and, as such, art, aesthetics, literature, philosophy, spirituality and the like, unfortunately came to be considered either unnecessary or incompatible with the material requirements of the times.

The most unfortunate thing emerging from this is that very few

people amongst the Kashmiri Pandits have really tried to salvage the situation even after several centuries of spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic slumber. If we try to scan the entire gamut of Kashmir's contribution in various fields of secular, spiritual, religious and philosophical enquiry, we will find astonishing revelations. It appears that Kashmir has been the source of many world-renowned treatises in various fields of human endeavor and has been able to preserve many important traditional literary works in their pristine form without any attempt to alter or corrupt their original content. However, as has been discussed earlier, once an original treatise or original literary work came out of Kashmir, it suffered from deliberate or inadvertent emendations, which often resulted in corruption of the original work.

Appendices

Appendix - 1

Sources:

General Historians-(GH)

Kalhana's Rajtarangini-(KR)

Time Frame	Kings/Queens, Important Events & Contributions
3450 B.C. **(Gonanda Dynasty starts)** 3180 B.C. (GH) 2449 B.C. (KR)	**Commencement of Gonanda Dynasty** Commencement of this dynasty appears to have taken place about 250 years before the advent of Pandavas and Kauravas in about 3200 B.C. **Gonanda-I** There was a battle between Gonanda-I (18th king of Gonanda dynasty) and Balabhadra (brother of Lord Krishna) at Mathura; (the former being a close friend of King Kansa of Mathura) in which Gonanda lost and was killed. After the death of Gonanda-I, his son, Damodara-I, became the ruler of Kashmir.
3149 B.C.	**Damodara-I** He was eager to avenge the defeat and death of his father. Hence, he attacked Lord Krishna's Yadva forces. In this battle Damodara-I was killed by Lord Krishna after a stiff fight. Later, on the advice of Lord Krishna, Yashovati , the wife of King Damodara-I, who was pregnant, was crowned as the queen of Kashmir.
3165 B.C. (GH)	**Yashovati** It appears that this event had created some misgivings because prior to it women, as per custom, were not made the rulers. Thus, Kashmir had given the lead in setting an example in boldly deviating from a precedent which smacked of male dominance. By this Lord Krishna had lifted not only the status of women to the lofty pedestal of goddess Parvati but, in fact, referred to Kashmir as the Land of Parvati.

3142 B.C.	**Gonanda-II** Queen Yashovati gave birth to a son who was given the name of his grand-father and was named as Gonanda-II. When the great Mahabharata war was fought, the king of Kashmir, who was still a child, could not participate in this great battle.
3112 B.C.	**Harandev** The first Pandav king of Kashmir
2382 B.C to 1507 B.C. (KR) [875 years]	35 kings (records unknown) Dr. D.S.Trivedi in his "Indian Chronology" and Pandit Kota Venkatachalam in his "Chronology of Kashmir Reconsidered" have mentioned the names of the above 35 kings, which, according to them, are found in Mulla Ahmed's "History of Kashmir" written in the Persian language. The list starts from King Parikshit (grand-son of Arjuna of the Pandvas) and ends with King Bagavanta predecessor of King Lava. The total duration of the rule of these 35 kings would be about 875 years beginning 2382 B.C. upto 1507 B.C. (according to Kalhana's approximate estimate.
	Lava, Kusha, Khagendra King Lava is supposed to have built eighty four lakh stone buildings in Lolora (modern Lolab) and bestowed Agraharas (land grants) to Brahmins in south Kashmir.
Middle of the 4th Century B.C.	**Surendra** **Buddhism enters Kashmir** According to the Chinese sources, it was Madhyantika, a disciple of Ananda (the main disciple of Gautama Buddha), who succeeded in bringing Sarvastivad Buddhism to Kashmir, after having subdued the Nagas by his supernatural powers. Surendra is stated to have been the first Buddhist ruler of Kashmir.

	This king built number of Viharas; the prominent among them being Narendrabhavana at Soraka in Darad country in the northern region of Kashmir and Saurasa (modern Saura) inside the Valley. After Surendra, Simha succeded him as the king. He became a Buddhist monk and adopted the name of Sudarshana.
	Godhara Godhra built the twin villages of Godhara-Hastishala (now known as Gudar & Asthel), situated on the right bank of Veshev in South Kashmir. He bestowed these to the Brahmins. **Suvarna** Constructed a canal *Suvarnamani* (modern Sunman-kul near Zainapur plateau) in South Kashmir.
	Janaka He built Viharas for Buddhists and provided Agraharas for Brahmins. This shows that the indigenous Nilmata cult and early Buddhism flourished syncretically during this period. **Sacinara** He provided Agraharas for Brahmins at Shamangasa (modern Shangas) and Shanara (modern Shar).
326 B.C.	**Demetrious and Menandar** Alexander marched his armies into India. He was welcomed by the king of Abhisaras, whose sway extended to some parts of Kashmir also. After his departure the Greeks established certain chief-ships in the regions extending to the north-west of India. Demetrious became the king of a vast territory, which also included Kashmir. Menandar, who succeeded him, exercised sovereignty over Kashmir. A large number of Indo-Greek coins including those of Menandar, describing him as the king of north-western India, have been found in Kashmir and adjoining areas.

Ruled from: 273-232 B.C. (GH) 253 B.C. (KR) Lived from: 304 -232 B.C. (GH)	**Ashoka** Ashoka built many stupas and viharas at Shuskaletra (modern Hukhlitra) and Vitastatra (modern Vethavatur near Verinag). It is this monarch who built the earlier city of Srinagar which originally was situated at Pandrathan (known earlier as Puranadheshthan near modern Badamibagh cantonement). He is also supposed to have built two Shiva Vijveshvara temples (also known as Ashokeshvara) at Vijveshvara (Vejibror) with stone walls surrounding the whole premises. He was an ardent worshiper of Shiva. He built a great temple at Bhuteshvara (now called Naran Nag). He is supposed to have prayed at that spot for begetting him a son who would destroy the Malechas (perhaps Greeks) who had made inroads into Kashmir. (See Note 2 on page 193)
	Jaloka He was the son of Ashoka. The Vedic-Nilmata cult, with particular emphasis on lingam worship, attained new heights during his regime. He is referred to as "the vanquisher of the Buddhists." He is said to have let loose a rain of terror on the Nagas, by storming their habitations. At the instance of an Avadhuta, he took a vow that he would only follow Shaivism. He persecuted the Buddhists, and destroyed their Viharas and Stupas. While patronizing Shaivism, he built Shiva temples on Buddhists sites. Jalauka, it is stated, could not even tolerate the sound of the Buddhist hymns on the pretext that these disturbed his sleep and for this reason, he got demolished all the Buddhist Viharas. During his rule there appears to be hardly any immigration of non-natives into the Valley.
	Damodara-II He was an ardent protagonist of Shaivism. He founded a city on the plateau of Yachh Pargana which, as such, came to be known as Damodar Vudder (which is the present site of Srinagar Airport).

130-80 B.C.	**Bactrian Vassals** took over the lordship of Kashmir.
80 B.C.	**Saka/Parthian Appointees** took over the over-lordship of Kashmir which finally culminated in the rule of Kanishka.
34 B.C. – 13 A.D.	**Sandimat**
78 – 144 A.D.	**Kanishka** (Founder of the Kushyan Empire). The Fourth Buddhist Council is stated to have been held at Kundanvan Monestry (near Srinagar) during his stewardship over Kashmir which, at that time, was a part of the Kushyan Empire.
	Nagarjuna He lived at Sadarhadvana (modern Harvan) and was given the pedestal of Bodhisattva. The predominance of Buddhists under Nagarjuna caused a decline in the prevailing Naga-Vedic religious and cultural traditions. However, the story goes that the Nagas were able to retaliate by divine intervention and retribution when excessive snowfalls and cold weather continued for number of years in the Kashmir region which mostly destroyed Buddhist and miraculously saved majority of the Brahmin adherents of Nilmata-Vedic cult.
140-178 A.D.	**Huvishka or Huska (son of Kanishka)**
	Vasudeva (also known as Juska). End of Kushyan Rule.
	Abhimanyu-I
(Gonanda or Gonandiya Dynasty/name revived)	**Gonanda-III** Adopted the ancient Gonanda dynasty name. He is stated to have restored the ancient Naga pantheon, the Nilmata practices and order in the country of Kasyapa under his virtuous rule. He is known as the founder of the Gonanda/*Gonandiya Dynasty*/ name revived.

	Vibhishena-I He succeeded his father, Gonanda-III, to the throne of Kashmir.
	Indrajit He succeeded his father, Vibhishena-I to the throne of Kashmir.
	Ravana He succeeded his father, Indrajit. Kalahana tells us that he was an accomplished devotee of Shiva. He states that a Linga, known as Vateshvara, worshipped by him was radiant even to his day and that its luminous dots and lines foretold events to come. It is interesting to note that devotees of Shiva, even though bearing ignoble names from the view point of Ramayana, such as Vibhishena, Indrajit and Ravana were freely adopted in Kashmir just like in Sri Lanka.
(The revived Gonanda/ Gonandiya name/ Dynasty ends)	**Vibhishena-II** He succeeded his father, Ravana, to the throne of Kashmir.
	Nara I (Kinnara) Terrific and bloody conflict took place between the king and the Nagas which resulted in the destruction of riverine towns and villages near modern Bijbihara in which one of the most famous temples known as Chakradhara was also destroyed. According to Kalhana, the main cause for this upheaval, was the lascivious behaviour of the king who tried to molest one of the beautiful daughters of Naga chieftain, Shushravas.
	Vashiska
	Siddha
	Utpalaksha
	Hiranyaksha

	Hiranyakula
	Vasukula
484 A.D.	**Toramana** Epthalite or white Hun ruler.
515 A.D.	**Mehirkula** Known for his cruelty. When an elephant accompanying his army slipped into the ravine, he was so thrilled by its shriek that he ordered a 100 of them to be thrown over. He is known to have killed hundreds of women on ground of having declared them unchaste. He resided at Vejbror.
	Baka
	Kshitinanda
	Vasunanda
	Nara-II
	Aksha
	Gopaditya Son of Aksha; known for having rebuilt the existing temple of Jeyeshtrudra (Later named as "Shankracharya").
	Gokarna
	Khinkhila (Narendradittya I) Son of Gokarna.
	Yudhishtra-I Known for debauchery and base indulgence. His vices and crimes are said to have been numerous. He was despised by his subjects. He finally fled with his many wives across the passes into Punjab. When he was finally apprehended, his last days were spent in a prison in Duarganjan (modern Drugjan).
	Pratapaditya-I
	Jalaukas

	Tunjina-I He and his saintly wife, Vakpusta, were patrons of learning and fine arts. During his rule the Valley was gripped with a terrible famine caused due to an untimely snowfall in the month of September. Having no son of her own, she performed sati on the death of her husband. The place where both were cremated was known as Vakpustatawi. She created an endowment which used to feed poor people long after her demise right upto the time while Kalhana was alive.
	Vijaya Laid the foundations of a town surrounding the shrine of Vijayeshwara.
	Jayendra The story goes that he put his pious Minister, Samdhimati, to a cruel death who's life seems to have been miraculously restored.
	Samdhiman (Arya Raja) He ascended the throne after the death of Jayendra. Devoted most of his time to the worship of Lord Shiva and neglected the affairs of his kingdom and thereby alienated his people and his ministers. He finally abdicated his throne and renunciated the world. He spent his last days as a recluse in Siva Bhuteshvara (at Naran Nag). However, his memory was preserved through several endowments created after his death.
(Gonandiya Dynasty / name re-restored) Later part of 6^{th} Century A.D.	**Meghavahana** Buddhism revives while, at the same time, the syncretic Nilmata-Vedic culture also strengthened. He belonged to Gonandiya dynasty. After having been brought back from Gandhara, he was installed as the king of Kashmir. He, as a youth, had attended the Swamvara conducted by the king of Assam as a result of which he was chosen by Princess Amritprabha. He was not only a devout Buddhist

	but also a great humanist and was, in fact, strictly against the killing of animals. During his rule he, not only built number of Buddhist Viharas but also bestowed many Agraharas to Brahmins. His queen Amrtaprabha built the famous Amrtabhavana Vihara for foreign Bhikhsus. In the beginning, he was rather tough with the Nagas, but later he became more considerate towards them. The Nilmata-Vedic cult remained in vogue syncretically along with Buddhism; the latter having precedence under the royal patronage that was received by it.
	Shresthasena Pravarasena-I (Tunjina-II) Founded the present-day city of Srinagar, then named as Pravarpura, which extended along the right bank of River Jhelum from the Hari Parbat to Maisuma locality. However, the name of Pravarapura did not continue for long and, in fact, eventually assumed the name of Srinagar; a city which already existed and covered the area of Puranadhesthan (near Pandrathan and present locality of Badamibagh). He was succeeded by his two sons, Hirayana and Toramana.
	Hiranya & Toramana Hiranaya imprisoned his brother Toramana. His wife, while in hiding, gave birth to a son who was later named after his grandfather as Praversena-II.
	Matrugupta. A poor Brahmin from Kashmir and a poet of great standing (who was in the court of Vikramaditya of Ujjain) was deputed by this king to rule Kashmir. He ruled righteously and than finally voluntarily relinquished his monarchy in favour of Pravarasena-II of Gonandiya dynasty.
	Praversena-II

	Yudhisthira-II Ruled over a domain stretching from Kashmir to Kabul.
	Lahkhana (Narendraditya II)
	Ranaditya (Tunjina-III) Brother of Narendraditya II. King Ranaditya was a great warrior and his glory spread far and wide. He, along with his queen Ranarambha, consecrated a number of Shiva and Veshnu temples in Srinagar.
	Vikramaditya
615-627 A.D. **(Re-restored Gonandiya name/ Dynasty ends with this king)**	**Baladitya** Buddhism eclipsed by Nilmata-Vedic and Shakti culture was followed by re-emergence of panchratra (Vaishnava) cult. This king was the last king of the Gonandiya Dynasty. During the period beginning from the rule of Shresthasena, Hiranya Toramana, Matrgupta, Pravarasena-II. Yudhisthira-II, Narendraditya, Ranaditya, Vikramaditya to Baladitya, Buddhism was completely overwhelmed by the re-emergencc of traditional Nilmata-Shiv-Shakti cum Vedic cult which included the Pancharatras (i.e.Vaishnava Bhagvatas) which had re-emerged.

NOTES

NOTE 1

Chronology of Gonanda Dynasty

Brigadier Rattan Kaul in his paper titled: "Era aberrations by Kalhana in Rajatarangini", posted on the internet states:

"Assuming that Gonanda-I had been king roughly for 30 years at the time of his death, Gonanda-I's reign would start around 77/78 years Pre-Kali-Samvat {3179/3180 B.C., 3258 Pre-Saka} as against 2526 Saka-Samvat {2449 B.C.} given by Kalhana; a difference of around 730 years from quoted era of 653 Kali-Samvat. The miscalculated dates from Gonanda-I could be as under:-

Gonanda-I's coronation is roughly 77/78 years Pre-Kali-Samvat, 102/103 years Pre-Laukika-era {Saptarishi-Samvat} {3257/58 Saka-Samvat; 3179/3180 B.C.}. Gonanda-I was killed and Damodar-I's coronation was roughly 48 years Pre-Kali-Samvat, i.e 73 years Pre-Laukika-era {roughly 3149 B.C.; 3227 Pre-Saka-Samvat}. Yasovati was also coronated around the same time. It can be assumed that Damodar-1's death took place 2-3 years after his coronation. Gonanda-II assumed to be around 10 years old at the time of Bharata War, can be dated as coronated at a time when he was about as 6 years old; 40 years Pre-Kali-Samvat; 65 Years Pre-Laukika-era {3142 B.C. and 3220 Pre-Saka-Samvat}. Even if Rajatarangini's reference of taking 653 Kali-Samvat as the base date of King Gonanda-I's coronation is considered, it would be at least 42-43 years before the era mentioned {Around 611/610 Kali-Samvat}. Thus, the chronology of the kings of Kashmir should have started from 77/78 years Pre-Kali-Samvat; 102/103 years Pre-Laukika-era (Saptarishi-Samvat) {3179/3180 B.C.; 3257/58 Pre-Saka-Samvat}. Historical narrations by our scholars have so far been quoting 653 Kali-Samvat of Kalhana in all references to the kings of Kashmir; out by nearly 730 years. Gonanda-I's rule is also placed around same time after Bharata War {Verses 56/57}. Rajatarangini goes along with the narration of Gonanda-I's help to the king of Mathura, Damodar-I's coronation followed by his killing followed by Yasovati's coronation and finally that of her son Gonanda-II who was a child at the time of Bharata War {Mahabharata}. These are contradictory with the dates/timings and sequence of events connected with the king's of Kashmir. Kalhana does not recognize the time elapsing between the four rulers and brackets it at the same time and that too with the coronation of Yudishthir, which happens immediately after the War. Is there a mix up?

Kalhana quotes that fifty two rulers from Gonanda-I up to Gonanda-III have not been recorded. Nineteen names of kings in the narration in Taranga-1 are given and thirty five kings after Gonanda-II are placed in lost kings, whose record of names and deeds have perished {Verse 83 Taranga 1}. Rajatarangini counts Huska, Juska and Kanishka as one entity, actually making the total to fifty four kings. As per narration in initial parts of Taranga-1, these fifty four kings reign for a total of 1266 years, starting from Kali-Samvat 653 {Laukika-era 628}. From Gonanda-III onwards the number of years of the rule of the kings {Verse 191 Taranga-1} is given {The era details have been calculated backwards from the Laukika-era given in Verse 703 Taranga 4}. With this calculation, Gonanda-III's reign begins in Laukika-era 1894 {1182 B.C., Pre-Saka-Samvat 1204}. Taking revised calculated dates of Gonanda-I {3179/3180 B.C}, the total years of reign of these kings up to Gonanda-III adds up to around 2000 years as against 1266 years given by Kalhana. Dates upto Taranga-3 give an impression of overstated duration of reigns of Gonand Dynasty {Taranga-1} and that

of the 'Restored Gonanda Dynasty' {Taranga-3}. The names appearing after Gonanda-III, apart from being heavily antedated, also give an impression that some of the kings may have ruled for very short period or they did not exist."

NOTE 2

Ashoka of Kashmir Mistaken as Emperor Ashoka

If we carefully examine the narrative of Kalhana, it will be evident that there is some serious mistake if one considers King Ashoka of Kashmir as the emperor Ashoka of Maghada. This is not only confusing but also contradictory. If we presume that this Ashoka is the same as emperor Ashoka of Maghada, as is presumed by many scholars including M.A.Stein, then, how is it that Jalauka can be said to be his son as that would be contrary to the facts as are known about Ashoka of Maghada.

Moreover, when Ashoka is shown as a staunch Buddhist, how is it that he could become a devotee of Lord Shiva as is evident by his contribution towards the construction of twin Shiva temples at Vegibror and his austerities at Bhuteshvara and Naran Nag ? He is also supposed to have prayed for begetting a son so that in future, the latter would be able to exterminate the Malechas (Greeks) from the land, which is something that the great emperor Ashoka himself could have easily accomplished.

King Jalauka, who succeeded his father, King Ashoka of Kashmir, is supposed to have been a staunch follower of Vedic-Nilmata cult, especially the Krama Tantricism of Kashmir. He was a follower of saint Avadhuta; the one who is said to have defeated Buddhist adherents in doctrinal debates. The king had taken a vow that he would always worship Shiva, meaning thereby that he had no leanings towards Buddhism. How could the son of a staunch Buddhist like emperor Ashoka suddenly change his religious leanings after he took over the reigns of the land? It is the most unlikely thing to happen. This apparently creates an enigmatic situation. In the absence of any other supporting factors showing that this Ashoka was indeed the great Ashoka of Maghada, the conclusion one can draw is that the 'Ashoka' mentioned by Kalhana could not be the same as the 'emperor Ashoka'. Dr. D.S.Trivedi in his "Indian Chronology" and Pandit Kota Venkatachalam in his "Chronology of Kashmir—Reconsidered" are of the same opinion and have propounded that King Ashoka of Kashmir was called Dharmashoka and belonged to the Gonandiya dynasty. He is supposed to have lost his kingdom when Malechas occupied it. His son Jalauka later re-conquered the land. Kalhana also has not given any indication which would suggest that Ashoka, who built the city of Srinagar, was in fact the Maghadan emperor.

The only conclusion one can draw is that the 'Ashoka' mentioned by Kalhana can only be 'Dharmashoka' of Kashmir and not the King Ashoka of Magadha. Incidently, the 'Ashoka of Kashmir' is shown by Kalhana as one who was receptive to Buddhist doctrines in addition to his Shaivite faith, which appears to be the reason that may have led many scholars to the wrong conclusion that it was the Magadhan King Ashoka who built the city of Srinagar in Kashmir. The coincidence of emperor Ashoka's rule (273-232 B.C.) with that of King Ashoka of Kashmir could be one of the reasons for the confusion.

NOTE 3

Lost Kings - King Ashoka and Kanishka

In regard to the chronology of King Ashoka, Brigadier Rattan Kaul, has the following view:

"We also know for sure that King Ashoka {304 -232 B.C.} ruled from 273 - 232 B.C. and taking the average rule of these fifty four kings and working on Kalhana's dates, Ashoka's rule is placed about a thousand years before his real known date. Similarly Kanishka's reign is dated as 78-144 A.D. and, as per Rajatarangini calculation, Kanishka's rule has chronological error of about eleven hundred ante-dated years. If we take the Kashmir kings chronology from 3179/3180 B.C. as deduced, this gap increases to seventeen hundred years plus, in case of Ashoka, and nearly eighteen hundred thirty years in case of Kanishka. Also, as per reworked chronology, the reign of fifty four kings spans nearly three thousand one hundred years up to Kanishka, at an average of fifty eight years plus per king, which is very high as compared to normal averages in the complete book. The difference between actual dates of rule of Ashoka and Kanishka is one hundred fifty four years, in which only two kings have been shown {Jaluka, son of Ashoka, and Damodara-II} at an average of more than seventy years. This average too is rather very high. Damodara-II's name akin to Damodara-I appears to be from a different dynasty than those listed prior to him {Mauryan Dynasty}. Possibly this king could be from the same old Gonandiya Dynasty {restored}. This could also indicate that after the rule of Kushans {Kanishka, Huska, and Juska} the same dynasty was restored in the form of King Abhimanyu-I, a known name from Mahabharata {Son of Pandav's, killed during the Bharata War during *Chakravyuh*). Even after Abhimanyu-I, the Gonandiya Dynasty, (whether it is the same as the initial Gonanda Dynasty is difficult to assert) as per Kalhana's Rajatarangini ruled Kashmir . It is known that a dynasty, after coming to power again, named king on the lines of earlier ones. It is also known that Ashoka and the reign of his successors in the region continued till 185 B.C., when last in the line of Maurya

Dynasty, King Brhadrata, was killed. The period after Mauryan Dynasty up to Kushan king, Kanishka {Coronation 78 A.D.} was known to be part of Indo-Greek Kingdom, which has not been listed. Even after Kanishka, the line of successors as listed in History of Bharatvarsha are Huvishka, Vasudeva (Juska} and Vashiska: in that order. Huviska {Huska} and Juska, have been identified from places named after them in Kashmir. *Kanishkpura*, named after Kanishka, is *Kanispor*, a village between Vitasta and road from Baramulla {*Varhamulla*} The locals treat it as a *Tirath* and attribute its founding to King Kanistharaja {King Kanishka}. Husakpura {*Ushkar*} in Varahakshetra {Baramulla} is named after Huviska. As far as Juska is concerned, founding of Jusakpura {*Zukura*} a large village north of Srinagar {6.5 kms from Hari Parvat} is attributed to him. No connecting artifacts or coins of later Kushan kings other than mentioned have been found in Kashmir and it is impossible to clearly define whether any of the other Kushan rulers reigned over Kashmir. As per mythology, Harandev, second son of Parikshit {Yudshithir's grandson}, is termed as first Pandav king of Kashmir, after Gonanda-II, followed by another twenty three in the line. This may well fit into the Kalhana's assertion {Verse 51} that 653 years of the Kaliyuga had passed away when the Kurus and Pandav's lived on the earth. On a fair estimate, names and deeds of nearly other fifty kings, totaling nearly eighty five kings, have been lost. These could well be distributed within: The period of thirty five kings after Damodara-II {including Harandev and twenty three of Pandav lineage} and the period between Kings Surendra and Godhara {later belonging to another family indicating change in dynasty} in the list of kings recorded by Helaraja and Chavillakara and finally the period of Indo-Greek rulers after Ashoka's Maurya Dynasty and before the Kushan rule."

NOTE 4

Reign and Era - Kings Abhimanyu to Baladitya and thereafter

Brigadier Rattan Kaul further states:

"In the initial part of Taranga-I, after Kanishka, King Abhimanyu-I is listed at the end of the list in the calculation of total of 1266 years {Laukika-era 628-1894}. Narrative is thereafter resumed with Gonanda Dynasty from Laukika-era 1894 to 2896, giving a total of twenty one kings totaling 1002 years duration of their reign, averaging more than fifty years per king; from about 1182 B.C. to 180 B.C. {Verse 191 Taranga-1 onwards}. Actually these dates should have been in A.D. era, since the king listed earlier {Kanishka} was known to have ruled in 78-144 A.D. Taranga-2 lists six kings for a total of 192 years: Laukika-era 2896 to 3088 corresponding to 180 B.C.-12 A.D. Again these dates are out of tune with certain known names of kings and their actual dates of reign. In Taranga-3, ten kings are listed for five hundred and eighty nine years;

averaging nearly sixty years per king {Laukika-era 3088 to 3677 (Corresponding to 12-601 A.D.)}; which is an abnormally high average and. in one case, unbelievable three hundred years {Ranaditya (Tunjana-III)}. It is only at the end of Taranga-4 {Verse 703} records of exact dates for the various reigns in Laukika-era {3889 Laukika-era corresponding to 813/4 A.D. onwards} are given. By this time the gap between actual and stated dates narrows down to approximately twenty five years. However, historical evidences of some of the listed kings exist like Nara {Destroyer of Vijayesvara (Vijibror) and founder of Narapura}, Hiranyaska {Founder of Hiranyapura}, Mihirkula {Mihir Kul}, Nara-II, Gopaditya {Gopagiri Agrahara fame; present day Shankracharaya}, Khinkhila-Narendraditya, Meghavahana, Hiranya-Toramana {Established with help of coins of his era}, Matrugupta, Pravarsena I and II {Pravarsena-II founder of Pravarpura (Srinagar)}, Vikramaditya-Harsha of Ujjain, Lakhana-Narendraditya {established from silver coins with the inscriptions which bears the legend Raja Lakhana Udayaditya} and Baladitya to a certain extent. In Taranga-4 from King Durlabvardhana {Karkota Dynasty} onwards the details are closer to dates confirmed by other chronicles, coins or foreign notices, travelogues of Chinese and other travellers etc. However, even after giving the dates of Karkota Dynasty kings, there is a difference of twenty five years. Mystery of 25 years difference in Taranga-4 upto King Abhimanyu-I and generally of the whole era from Gonanda-I, is given in total number of years. It is only from Gonanda-III {Verse 191 Taranga-1} till Verse 703 Taranga-4, the total number of years of reign of each king are given. Verse {703 Taranga-4} Laukika-era {3889} concerns the reign of King Ajitpada {Laukika-era 3926}. Taranga-4 starts with King Durlabhavardhana of Karkota Dynasty and the calculated date of his accession is marginally antedated by twenty five years from the actual dates calculated from other sources, mostly Chinese, which were recorded much earlier than the composition dates of Rajatarangini and have been proved to be more authentic dates. During the time of Gonandiya Dynasty the first Chinese reference to Kashmir was traced to a record dated 541 A.D., based on the account of an 'Indian Envoy' who reached China during the early part of the reign of Tang Dynasty {541 A.D.}. Ninety years later Hieun Tsang {631 A.D.}, the Chinese pilgrim, gives a vivid account of various places including Pravarpura and the kings of Kashmir. We have also reference in Chinese Annals to Durlabhavardhana, the founder of Karkota Dynasty, who, as per Rajatarangini, ruled from around 600/601 to 636 A.D. Another Chinese notice of Kashmir contained in the Chinese annals of the above Tang Dynasty records an embassy from the king of Kashmir in China {in or shortly after 713 A.D.}. Chinese pilgrim Ou-K'ng {759 A.D.} also extensively covered Kashmir, its surrounding areas and recorded the details of Kashmir."

"From the comparison of date found in Chinese and other records, more closer to actual dates of Karkota Dynasty, the kings in this Taranga (Taranga-4) are ante-dated by around twenty five years including those of Lalitaditya Muktapida. This aberration, which occurs in dates of reign closer to the date of composition of Rajatarangini, when its author would have had access to recent past records of the kings, can best be explained on the basis that Kalhana, while calculating the same, possibly mixed up the dates with Kali Samvat years, which is antedated by twenty five years to Laukika-era. This is also confirmed by the fact that the book suddenly gives the beginning year of reign of King Ajitpada in Laukika-era followed by end era of his reign; again in Laukika-era."

NOTE 5

Other Points of Misinterpretation

Brigadier Rattan Kaul, in continuation, further states:

"Kalhana holds an iconic position: he is very learned and Rajatarangini is a unique chronicle of 12th Century in Kavya style. He apparently had studied a lot of material available at that time; Ramayana, Mahabharata, Nilmat Puranam, works of Helaraja's Parthivavali {List of kings}, Suvrata's composition, Ksemendra's Nrpavali, Bilhana's works, works of Arya-Bhatta, Bhaskara, Varaha-Mihir and other astronomers and many more chronicles and scriptures. It is nearly impossible to find faults or mistakes in the work but to err is human. We do not know the personal circumstances under which Kalhana completed Rajatarangini; did he revise it, was he correct in not accepting the historic works of earlier times or were they really not up to standard. Nearly nine centuries later it is difficult to sit in judgment of his work but with plethora of material available over the centuries, more reliable and correct information can be formed of the era's, kings and events. Kalhana had thoroughly read various scriptures and it is but natural that his work should have been free of any errors or somewhat ambiguous references."

Rule of Kurus {Kuravs} and Pandavas. (Brig. Rattan Kaul)

"Verse 51, Taranga-1 refers to the rule of Kurus and Pandavas till about 653 Kali Samvat. Again Verse 44 Taranga-1 refers to Gonanda-III {As per Kalhana's reckoning Gonanda-III was in Kali year 1919 (1182 B.C.) while as the same could in fact possibly be 2nd Century A.D.} to be "contemporaries of Kuru's and sons of Kunti". The way events, quotes, characters from Mahabharata have been quoted in the chronicle; there is no doubt about Kalhana's mastery over the epic. However, this verse and few more give an impression that Kuru's {Kuravs} and Pandav's were two different dynasties from the beginning and both

continued to rule Bharatvarsha after the Bharata War. As per the mythology and scriptures, origin of Kurus starts from Dushyant and Shankuntala, whose son is Bharata. King Hastina, who established Hastinapur, was son of King Bharata and Kuru was King Hastina's son and the dynasty was called Kurus {Kuravs}. Later in the line three brothers, Dhritarashtra, Pandu, and Vidura were born. Dhritarashtra was blind, Pandu "the pale one", called as such as he was pale at the time of birth and Vidura, reincarnation of sage Vyasa, so was thought to be of humble birth. Pandu was set on the throne as the king and this became the bone of contention and finally resulted in Bharata War {Mahabharata}. From here the distinction of Kurus {Kuravs} and Pandus {Pandav's} starts. Sons of Dhritarashtra {Kuravs} fought in the Bharata War. Duryodhana had twenty nine sons of which few survived. Upon the death of all, Ashwathhama crowned Durmukha, youngest son of Duryodhana as the next king and continued the struggle. After the war the defeated Kuravs migrated to west and formed the Kathi tribe, now living in Kathiawar {Gujarat}. Pandav's line after Yudishthir was carried on by his grandson Parikshit, who, after sixty years rule coronated his twenty five year old son Janamejaya and then died. Parikshit had another son, Harandev and he is termed as the first Pandav king of Kashmir, roughly 30 years after Gonanda-II. The date of Kuravs and Pandav's thus pegged to 653 Kali-Samvat is ambiguous. Reference to Jina in verse 102 is made when King Ashoka is stated to have embraced the doctrine of Jina, who is stated to have covered *Susalaletra* {Village of *Hukhlitr*} and *Vitastatra* {Vithvutur village near Verinag} with numerous Stupas. The reference to *Jina* is not to Buddha as Kalhana refers to Buddha {Gautam Buddha [623 - 547 B.C.} as *Mahasakya* {Verse 140-144 Taranga-1} and *Sakyasimha* {Verse 172 Taranga-1} and at many other places Kalhana used *Buddha* term in Taranga's 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 while referring to Gautam Buddha. Generally, when reference is to Jina, it refers to abhorring of killing, which is also associated with Lord Mahavira {575 B.C.} and who used to be also called *Jaina* {Jina}. Hopefully the words Jina referred here has not been used out of context in the chronicle by Kalhana."

150 Years to Buddha from the reign of Kushan kings {Verse 172 Taranga-1}. (Brig. Rattan Kaul)

"In this verse *Sakyasimha* {Buddha} is placed just 150 years before Kushan kings. In the table of chronology Ashoka is placed five rulers above Kushan kings, which also comes to about 150 years. Actually Ashoka {304 -232 B.C.} ruled from 273 - 232 B.C., nearly 300 years before Kushan kings {Kanishka, Huviska, Juska}. Gautam Buddha {623-547 B.C.} antedated Ashoka by nearly three centuries, making Buddha 600 years before the Kushan kings. One cannot find any answer to this aberration as mentioned in the verse."

In this connection, attention is drawn to what has been discussed above in context to the King Ashoka of Kashmir on the basis of which it is apparent that this ruler of Kashmir is not the same as emperor Ashoka of the Maurya dynasty.

627-632 A.D. (**Karkota Dynasty Starts**)	**Durlabhavardhan Prajhaditya** The new king was the founder of the royal Karkota Naga dynasty and was married to Anangalekha, daughter of King Baladitya.
632-682 A.D.	**Tarapida** He was cruel, merciless and irreligious. He was particularly against Brahmins whom he punished with impunity. His rule, which lasted for only four years, came to an abrupt end due to his premature demise.
695-732 A.D.	**Lalitaditya Muktapida** He was the contemporary of the Chinese traveller, Hieun-tsung. King Lalitaditya's illustrious reign in Kashmir, in many respects, is considered highly remarkable which not only brought peace and dignity to the common man, but also ushered in overall development in Kashmir. Besides this, he also subjugated many fiefdoms like those of Yasovarman of Kanyakabna, Gauda (Bengal), Kalinga, Karnatkas, Saphta Konkans (Western Ghats), Avanti (Ujjain), Bhautas and others. During his reign, which lasted for about 37 years, he founded and constructed many towns, temples etc. Among many foundations, two most important ones were the picturesque: (i) Parihaspora (modern Paraspor, now only as an archeological site), was a complex of palaces, lofty temples and Buddhist Viharas, and (ii) Martand Temple, near Mattan. The following is the summary of his contributions: • Lalitpora-built by the king's architect. • Vishnu Muktasvamin-temple and Vihara at Huskapura. • Shiva Jyestharudra temple at Bhutesha (modern Narannag).

	• Water-wheels at Chakradhara (modern Chakdar Bijbehara) for lifting water. • Town of Lokapunya (modern Lok Bavan). • Temple of Parihasakeshva (idol made of solid silver). • Temple of Muktakeshva (Idol made of solid gold). • Temple of Veshnu Mahavihara (with golden armour). • Temple of Govardhandhara Rajavihara (Buddhists). • Lofty statue of Brehad-Buddha.
732-740 A.D.	**Kuvalayapida** Eldest son of Lalitaditya, took the reigns after the death of the illustrious king. But he abdicated his throne and took to asceticism.
	Vajraditya Younger brother of Kuvalayapida who assumed the lordship of Kashmir. However, he also ruled for only seven years due to his premature death.
	Prthivyapida Vajraditya's son, ruled for only four years.
751 -782 A.D	**Jayapida** The youngest son of Vajraditya ascended the throne. Immediately after assuming the lordship, he left Kashmir on his expedition to other kingdoms. During his absence, his brother-in-law named Jajia treacherously entered Kashmir and usurped the throne. When King Jayapida returned after about three years. Jajia was defeated in battle and Jayapida recovered his throne. There are many stories mentioned in Rajatarangni about his exploits at Prayaga, Bengal and Nepal. During the earlier period of his reign, he did many laudable things which included granting literary patronage and restoration of Mahabhasha etc. But, later he is supposed to have become somewhat oppressive towards his subjects, especially Brahmins. He is stated to have become so cruel and greedy that he confiscated the properties of common folks and appropriated even the cultivator's share of the harvest for a number of years. It is believed that King Jayapida's end was cast due to spell of 'Brahmadanda' at Tulamulya (Tulmul)

	Note: The Brahmins residing at Tulamulya, while the king was on visit there, approached him with the request that their share in the harvest cultivated by them ought not to be appropriated. But, after angry arguments and counter arguments, the king arrogantly challenged the Brahmins that he was not afraid of any reprisals from them. One of the Brahmins named Ittila, in anger, instantly vowed and casted a spell of Brahmadanda against the king. It is said that at that very instant one of the golden poles, supporting the canopy under which the king was standing, suddenly collapsed and fell on the king's limbs and fatally injured him. The king died after a few days during which he suffered terrible pain and agony. That was the end of an otherwise illustrious monarch
782-855 A.D (**Karkota Dynasty ends**)	**Samgramapida,** **Chippatjayapida,** **Ajitapida,** **Anangapida,** **Utpalapida**
855-884 A.D. (**Utpala Dynasty starts**)	**Avantiverman** (**Kashmir's Golden Age**) Avantiverman stands on the highest pedestal in providing excellence in governance, patronage to literature and arts, laying of pious foundations and dedicating funds for upliftment of the general masses by performing such acts which had far reaching results for the betterment of the natives of Kashmir. His main achievements can be summarised as follows: (i) He showed remarkable self-control by not clinging to his wealth and treasures and gladly distributed gold and other valuables amongst the Brahmins. (ii) He was attached to his family, especially towards his step-brother Shuravarman whom he appointed as Yuvaraja. Shuravarman always remained loyal to him and carried out a number of pious foundations under the patronage of the great king. The illustrious Prabhakaravarman was one of this king's ministers.

(iii) He was the patron of many a literary and scholastic contributions made by great poets, scholars and other learned people of the lime such as Ratnakara. Muktakana, Anandavardhana and Sivasvamin. The Great Bhatta Kallata, the illustrious Shaivite pupil of Vasugupta, was one of the crest-jewels of King Avantivarman. The details of the literary and scholastic contriutions are provided in Chapter 6 of this Book

(iv) The most remarkable contribution by this illustrious monarch was in the realm of alleviating the hardships of the common citizens, particularly the rural folk. It was under his patronage that the regulation of river Vitasta and improvements in the system of irrigation was carried out by an able engineer named Suyya. The birds eye-view on this mammoth project is summarised as following:

Regulation of Vitasta by Suyya

When King Avantiverman took over the lordship of Kashmir in 855 A.D.. the course of river Vitasta beyond Srinagar was not the same as at present. The stretch of this river between Penznor (a village situated on the left bank of the river Vitasta, 8 kms. down-stream from Srinagar) and Wular-lake passed through Badrihel Nala situated between Paraspur Karewa and Village Trigam and thence merged into the south-east part of Wular. The river Sindh flowing from Sonamarg area through the Sindh-valley via Duderhama used to have its confluence with river Vitasta at Badrihel near Trigam and not at Shadipur, as at present. The whole area beyond Penznor in the direction of south-east part of Wular used to get inundated due to the flooding of river Vitasta, thereby destroying the crops and the rural settlements. The whole area would therefore become a vast swamp. King Avantiverman wanted to do something about it so that the misery faced by the people due to the repeated floods and famine could be stopped. It was one Suyya (an engineer of the time) who came forward and proposed to carry out the regulation of river Vitasta so that it not only would

stop the yearly inundation of the area, but also would improve the irrigation system. This was carried out by:

(1) Manual dredging of the river Vitasta upstream and downstream beyond Sopre, Baramulla upto Khadenyar so that the overall river depth increased, thereby reducing the tendency of repeated floods.

(2) Changing the course of Vitasta beyond Penznor, which took the route of Shadipur, Sumbal and thence to the eastern portion of Wular-lake. He thus plugged its flow towards the original route of Paraspur-Trigam area at Penznor; thereby stopping the flow of river Sindh at Shadipur towards its original confluence with Vitasta at Trigam. As a consequence of this major re-orientation, the Vitasta river, beyond Penznor, took the route as it exists at present.

(3) Providing protective embankments around major and vulnerable villages in various low lying areas. Suyya successfully carried out the above works as a result of which not only the yearly inundation of the adjoining areas stopped but also the land, so freed from water logging, produced better harvest. Thereby, as mentioned by Kalhana in his 'Rajtarangni', the cost of paddy got reduced by 82%. The town of modern Sopore (named as *Suyyapura*) owes its name to this illustrious son of the soil. The confluence of river Sindh and Vitasta, known as *Priyaga* (according to Nilmata Purana) was at Badrihel Nala (lying between Paraspur plateau and Trigam village); before Suyya's reorientation of Vitasta. After this, the confluence shifted to a place known as Shadipur, which later became sanctified as *Priyaga*.

Pious Foundations & Temple Erections

King Avantivarman built the town of Avantipur (modern Vuntpur) and erected number of temples, the most prominent among them being the great Avantisvamin and Avanteshvara dedicated to Lord Veshnu and Lord Shiva, respectively. The ruins of these temples are still the main tourist attraction.

884-903 A.D.	**Shankerverman** Avantiverman's son Shankerverman assumed the lordship of Kashmir. According to Kalhana Shankerverman's rule was oppressive and was characterized by excessive fiscal exactions.
903-905 A.D.	**Gopalverman** Shankerverman's son ruled for only two years.
905-907 A.D.	**Sugandha** Queen of Shankerverman ruled for only two years and was forced to abdicate in favour of Partha, child-son of Nirjitverman.
907-924 A.D.	**Partha**
924-935 A.D.	**Chakraverman**
935-938 A.D. (**Utpala Dynasty ends**)	**Suraverman-I, Partha** (**restored**), **Chakraverman** (**restored**).
938 A.D.	**Unamattwanti** He came to known for getting things into trouble due to his foolishness. Hence, the word *Wonmatt* in *Kashmiri* means one who, due to his foolishness, can land you into a troublesome mess.
939 A.D. (**Viradeva Dynasty starts**)	**Suraverman-II** Unamattwanti's son, Suraverman-II became the child-king but was forcibly deposed by his Commander-in-chief, Meruvardhana, in the same year. However he did not ascend the throne and instead, with the consent of all Brahmins, made Yashaskara (a prominent Brahmin) the king.
939- 948 A.D.	**Yashaskara**
948-950 A.D. (**Virdeva Dynasty ends**)	**Sangradeva-I** Sangramdeva-I was Yashakara's son. He was killed by Parvagupta, his minister, in A.D. 950; thus ending the Viradeva Dynasty.
950-975 A.D	**Parvagupta, Kshemegupta, Abhimanyu-II and Nandigupta** Parvagupta forcibly usurped the throne in 950 A.D. However, he ruled only for one year followed by Kshemegupta, Abhimanyu II and Nandigupta.

975-976 A.D	**Tribhuvanagupta** Parvagupta's brother succeeded him. He died soon thereafter.
976 - 981 A.D.	**Bhimagupta** He was the third son of Abhimanyu-II.
981 - 1004 A.D.	**Queen Dyeda** Took over the lordship of Kashmir for 23 years and, with her death, the dynasity of Parvagupta came to an end.
1004-1029 A.D **Lohara Dynasity starts**	**Sangramadeva-I** Ascended the throne after the death of queen Dyeda. He was succeeded by his son Hariraja.
1029 A.D.	**Hariraja** He died suddenly only after 22 days of his rule.
1029-1064 A.D.	**Ananta** Ananta was the younger brother of Hariraja. Being only a child at that time, he was placed on the throne by his milk-brother, Sagara. King Ananta married Suryamati (daughter of Raja Induchandra of Kangra) and ruled for 35 years. He defeated his rebel commander-in-chief, Tribhavana, in a fierce encounter in which the king displayed great personal bravery). He also repelled the invasion of Darad-Saka combine. During the later period of his rule King Ananta appears to have come under the great influence of his queen, Suramati, who acted as a de-facto ruler of Kashmir during her husband's reign.
	Queen Suryamati was a pious person who built number of temples and Mathas in the city of Srinagar on the banks of the river Vitasta namely Shiva Gaurishvara, Sadashiva (near present day Purshayar, 2^{nd} bridge in Srinagar city on the left bank of Vitasta) and elsewhere in the Valley. She also founded Mathas near Vijayeshvara (Vejibror) and Amaresha (Amburher near Hariparbhat).

1064-1089 A.D.	**Kalasha** Kalasha ruled for 26 years. King Ananta had to abdicate in favour of his son Kalasha under the advice of queen Suryamati who had a soft corner for him. But, later, Ananta again assumed the charge of lord-ship of Kashmir for a short period and then made his second son, Utkarsha, as his successor. Kalasha, thereafter, forcibly dethroned Utkarsha and himself became the sovereign and revolted against his father who had shifted to Vijayeshvara. In view of the seditious and shameful behaviour of his son, Kalasha, Ananta eventually committed suicide. He spent his last moments before the idol of Sun god inside the Martand temple precincts.
1089 - 1101 A.D.	**Harsha** Harsha's reign continued for 12 years. During the earlier period of his reign, he showed forbearance and prudence. He is described as a charming, handsome and gregarious personality but, as pointed out by Kalhana, the events that followed his ascension to the throne show that he was a complicated person; at times he would be kindhearted and at other times he was cruel and greedy. Sangaramaraja, great-grand-father of Harsha, had a paternal cousin named Jasaraja, ruler of Lohara. Jasaraja's grandsons Uchchala and Sushala (sons of Mallaraja) revolted against Harsha. Despite of their earlier failures, it was Uchchala who was eventually able to defeat Harsha and capture his throne. Harsha had to flee from his palace and was ignominiously killed by a common renegade.
1102-1113 A.D.	**Uchchala** He was treacherously killed by one Radda who may have been supported by other conspirators.
1113 A.D.	**Salhana** He was the son of Mallaraja and for a short while he took over the throne of Kashmir.

1113-1128 A.D.	**Sushala** He was the younger brother of King Uchchala. After the death of Uchchala, he ascended the throne. His rule lasted only for about a year. He was dethroned by Bhikshacara (another Claimant for the throne) in 1120 A.D. However, Sushala again regained his kingship in 1121 A.D. and ruled upto 1128 A.D. when he was killed by a traitor named Utpala.
1128-1154 A.D. (**Lohara Dynasty ends**)	**Jayasimha** King Jayasimha, son of Sushala, ascended the throne in 1128 A.D. During his rule a person of the name Bhikshacara lodged several attacks against the king but could not succeed and was ultimately killed in an encounter at Banihal (ancient Banashala). It is during King Jayasimha's rule that Kalhana wrote his Rajtarangini in 1148 A.D. King Jayasimha was still ruling when Kalhana completed his annals upto 1149 A.D.
1154-1213 A.D.	**Vopyadeva, Jassaka and Jadadeva.**
1213-1236 A.D.	**Rajadeva** The Brahmins of the time were dissatisfied with his rule and revolted against him. The despotic king tyrannized these Brahmins and subjected them to a lot of punitive measures.
1236-1301	**Sangramadeva-II, Ramdeva, Lakshmandeva, and Simhadeva.**
1301-1320 A.D.	**Sahadeva** During his rule three people came from outside. The first was Rinchan Shah, a fugitive Tibetan prince; the other was Shahmir from Swat (grandson of Furshah, a famous hermit; and the third, a fugitive named Lankar Chak, a ruler of Dardistan. All these three foreigners were received well by the Sahadeva.

1320-1339 A.D.	**Period of Transition from Hindu Rulers to kings who followed Islam.** **Rinchen** (upon conversion to Islam, called himself 'Sadr-ud-din'; 1320-1323 A.D.), He was followed by **Haider Khan** (1323 A.D.), **Udyandeva** (1323-1338 A.D.), **Kota Rani** (1338-1339). (See following NOTES 6 & 7)

NOTE 6:

Invasion by Zulqadir Khan (1322 A.D.)

Zulqadir Khan alias Zulchu/Dulchu, with 70,000 cavalry from Turkisthan invaded Kashmir. His rule lasted about 8 months during which period he resorted to unbelievable violence and depredations which remained in the living memory of Kashmiris for years to come. He forcibly converted 50,000 Brahmins to Islam who were taken as slaves and who perished while crossing the 'Devasar Pass' due to a snow-storm occurring at a place thereafter called *Bhatta Ganjan*. During this invasion Sahadeva fled towards Kishtawar along with his Commander-in-chief, Ramchandra.

Sahadeva did not return. Ramchandra came back to Kashmir and assumed rule. Rinchan Shah and Shahmir took service under him. Ramchandra became the Ruler (1323 to 1325 A.D.) and Shahmir as his Governor. Thereafter, they intrigued and killed him. Rinchan married Kota Rani, daughter of Ramchandra. He wanted to become a Hindu but Brahmins headed by one Devaswami did not admit him. Later he became a Muslim. Udwandeva, son of Sahadeva, returned and became the Ruler of Kashmir (1325-1327 A.D.) Whereupon he married Kota Rani. He appointed Shahmir as his Prime Minister. In 1331 A.D. Urdan, a Tartar thief, invaded the Valley via Hirpur with a large army. Udwandeva fled to Tibet but Kota Rani, with help of Shahmir, defeated the invader. Udwandeva returned and resumed his rule. Shahmir, as such, came to be the de facto ruler. After the king's death Shahmir usurped the throne as Sultan Shamsudin. He proposed to Kota Rani for marriage which she reluctantly accepted. But later she committed suicide immediately after this marriage. Shahmir ruled for 3 years.

NOTE: 7

Advent of Islam (1339 A.D.) and the aftermath

The painful aspect of the history of Kashmir actually starts from the period of Shankarverman (884-903 A.D.). The rot set in the ruling class, palace intrigues,

murders, oppression against the common people, economic degradation and social upheavals occurred and inapt unjust rulers came to rule during this period. Except for a short interregnum of comparative peace during the reigns of Yashishkara (939-948 A.D.), Uchchala (1102-1113 A.D.) and Jayasimha (1128-54), the rest of this period upto 1150 A.D. and the last phase of Hindu rule in Kashmir upto 1322 A.D. was turbulent and chaotic.

1339- 1342 A.D.	**Shahmir or Sultn Shamsuddin**
1359-1378 A.D.	**Mir Sayed Ali Hamdani** Mir Sayed Ali came from Persia and preached Islam which became the precussor for major conversions to this new faith that took place thereafter in Kashmir.
1389-1413 A.D.	**Sultan Sikander (The Iconoclast)** The depredations, mass killings, destruction of temples and places of learning reached its zenith during the period. It was during this time that the first mass exodus of Kashmiri Bhattas took place, whereupon they took refuge at many places in the northern and southern parts of India. The destruction of their art, culture, places of worship and learning indeed became enormous. It is said that the great Martand temple near Mattan, after many failures, could only be destroyed by covering the huge structure with wooden logs which were burnt. This was followed by pouring of cold water and pounding the walls with cannons. This process, is said, took several days, which finally resulted in the crumbling of this great temple. Similarly, there were many other temples which were also completely destroyed during this period.

NOTE 8

Exodus-I of Kashmiri Bhattas:

The first major exodus of Kashmiri Bhattas took place during the period from1394 & 1417 A.D. It is said that there remained only 11 families of Brahmins who hid themselves in far-off jungles and the remaining, who did not flee, were converted to Islam. It is during this period that Kashmiri Bhatta's tryst with destiny began.

In fact, this marked the beginning of the erosion of their ancient traditions, economic slump, religious persecution and consequent loss of life and property which together paved the way in their conversion to Islam. It was an ill-wind that blew none of them any good. The whole structure of their ancient culture and ethos almost collapsed by 1420 A.D. and miseries of all kinds ensued right from 1327 A.D. and steadily increased till 1420 A.D. During the mass migration of the Bhattas from Kashmir, some families are supposed to have fled to Goa, Karnataka, Konkan and parts of Maharashtra. It is said that in Karnataka, one minister named Madhava, who had conquered Aparanta Vishaya (Goa-western India) in 1360 A.D., gave villages of Muckchandi & Pallashapalli to 45 Kashmiri Brahmin migrant families. However, many migrants returned to their motherland during the period 1420-1470 A.D.

Change in social order

The ancestors of Kashmiri Pandits or Bhattas in the 14^{th} & 15^{th} century, particularly during Badshah's rule in Kashmir, had to readjust their social polity to suit the times. Prior to the coming of Islamic preachers, this community had a homogeneous social order with no demarcation within the Brahmin society in terms of vocational status. Everybody would attend to the duties of learning and teaching of *Dharma* (here it means religious and spiritual practices and doctrines.) in addition to their vocations, whether agriculture or service in the ruling government. But, as a consequence of the bifurcation of the Kashmiri Pandit society as a whole, the then elders of their community had to demarcate the roles between spiritual (Dharmic) and mundane (vocational) functions. This resulted in these two types of social obligations within the family which were assigned amongst its sons and sons-in-laws; Those people, who were asked to attend to vocational duties, were designated as *Karkuns* and those who attended the Dharmic obligations were termed as *Gurus*. However, as time passed, an unhealthy trend developed within their society which resulted in lending an air of superiority to the *Karkuns* as against the *Gurus* (who later came to be known as *Goars*) as a result of which marital relationships between these two classes came to be looked upon with disfavour.

NOTE 9

Rise of Reshe Order-confluence of Islam and Kashmir Shaivism

The dark clouds of repression and chaos which overwhelmed the Valley during the 14^{th} & 15^{th} Century strangely developed a silver lining when Lal Dyed & Nund Resh appeared and drew the attention of the people towards the goal of attaining spiritual elevation. This somewhat lent a soothing touch to those who were the victims of loot, arson and persecution. If, during those fateful years,

the Reshi Order had not proliferated in the Valley, things would have gone inevitably out of control which might have resulted in total ethnic erosion of Kashmiri Pandits from the soil of Kashmir.

1413 - 1420	**Alishah-I**
1420-1470 A.D.	**Zaina-ul-abdin (Budshah)** He was the son of Sultan Sikandar. Unlike his father, he came to be known for religious tolerance. This was a period of peace for Kashmiri Pandits. Budshah was considered a pious and benevolent monarch and was not a religious fanatic. He was a patron of art & literature. It is he who recalled most of the migrants who had left Kashmir en-masse during Sultan Sikandars time. Most of the migrants returned to their native land and were give suitable jobs in the government. It is during this period, the migrants who had settled outside but were called back, came to be known as *Bhanumasis* and those who remained in Kashmir were known as *Malmasis*. *Bhanumasis* were those who followed the Solar calendar and *Malamasis* were those who followed the Lunar calendar. The vicissitudes of Kashmiri Pandits faced by them during the preceding period resulted not only in the emergence of new social order, but also forced them to seek new pastures elsewhere.
1470-1472 A.D.	**Haider Shah** He was an alcoholic. During his rule the persecution of Bhattas again started.
1472 – 1484 A.D.	**Hasan Shah**
1484 – 1537 A.D.	**Mohammad Shah**
1486-1493 A.D.	**Sultan Fateh Shah** He was the 12th Sultan. His minister, Musa Raina, a begotted Shia, tyrannized the Bhattas, destroyed their temples and imposed Jazia tax upon them. He converted 24,000 Brahmins. In his reign 9000 Pandits, including women and children, perished during the Harmukta Ganga pilgrimage.

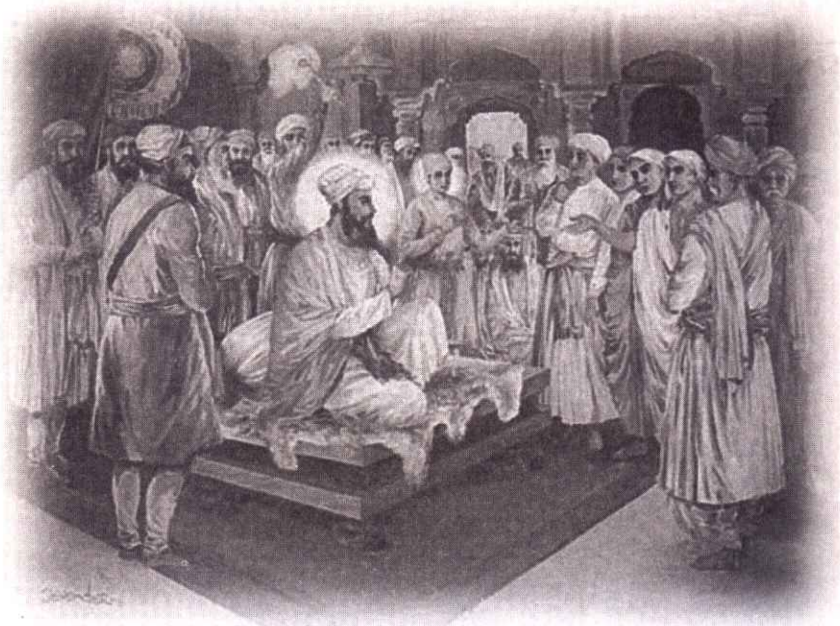
1493-1561 A.D.	**Muhammad Shah** (restored) [1493-1505], **Fathe Shah** (restored) [1505-1514], **Mohammad Shah** (re-restored) [1514-1515] **Fathe Shah** (re-restored) [1515-1516] **Muhammed Shah** (re-re-restored) [1516-1528] **Ibrahim Shah-I** [1528-1529] **Nazuk Shah** [1529-1530] **Muhammad Shah** (re-re-re-restored) [1530-1537] **Shamsuddin-II** [1537-1538] **Ismail Shah-I** [1538-1539] **Ibrahim Shah-II** [1539-1540] **Nazuk Shah** (restored) [1540-1552] (opposed by **Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat**) [1541-1551] **Ibrahim Shah-III** [1552-1555] **Ismail Shah-II** [1555-1557] **Nabib Shah** [1557-1561]
1561-1588 A.D.	**Chak Dynasty** **Ghazi Shah** [1561-1563] (a Shia, who tyrannized the Bhattas). **Husain Shah-I** [1563-1570] **Ali Shah-II** [1570-1579] **Yusuf Shah** [1579 d. 1586] **Sayyid Mubarrak Khan Baihaqi** [1579] **Lohar Shah** [1579-1580] **Yusuf Shah** (restored) [1580-1586] **Yaqub Shah** [1586 d. 1588] **Husain Shah-II** [1586] **Yaqub Shah** (restored) [1586-1588]
1588-1748 A.D.	**Mughal Rule** 63 Governors were appointed to rule Kashmir under the Mughal Rule. Their rule was tolerably good for the people except during the time of the over-lordships of **Qulich Khan** (1606), **Muzaffar Khan** (1690), **Abunasar Khan** (1694), **Jaffar Khan** (1707), **Aghar Khan** (1728) and **Iradat Khan** (1620; [**Mirza Haider** (Turkish leader) invaded Kashmir in 1532 and ruled Kashmir on behalf of fugitive emperor Humayun upto 1543]. **Mirza Kasim** [1588-1590] **Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi** [1590-1601]

	Mirza Ali Akbar [1601-1609] **Hasham Khan** [1609-1612] **Sardar Khan** [1612-1615] **Ahmad Beg** [1615-1618] **Dilavar Khan** [1618-1620] **Iradat Khan** [1620-1622] **Itkad Khan** [1622-1634] **Jaffar Khan** [1634-1640] **Murad Mirza** [1640-1641] **Ali Mardan Khan** [1641-1646] **Tarbiat Khan** [1646-1657] **Lashkar Khan** [1657-1659] **Itmad Khan** [1659-1662] **Ibrahim Khan** [1662-1664] **Saif Khan** [1664-1667] **Saif Khan** (restored) [1668-1671] **Iftikar Khan** [1671-1675] **Ibrahim Khan** (restored) [1678-1686] **Hafiz Allah Khan** [1686-1690] **Muzzaffar Khan** [1690-1692] **Abul Nassar Khan** [1692-1698] **Fazl Khan** [1698-1701] **Ibrahim Khan** (re-restored) [1701-1706] **Jaffar Khan** [1706-1709] **Arif Khan** [1709-1710] **Ibrahim Khan** (re-re-restored) [1710] **Navazish Khan** [1710-1711] **Inayatolla Khan** [1711-1713] **Saadat Khan** [1713-1715] **Inayatolla Khan** (restored) [1715-1722] **Najib Khan** [1722-1725] **Agidat Khan** [1725-1726] **Amir Khan** [1726-1728] **Ahtram Khan** [1728-1735] **Dil Dilir Khan** [1735-1736] **Jalal-ud-Din Khan** [1736] **Fahr -ud-Daula** [1736-1738] **Inayatolla Khan-II** [1738- 1741] **Azad Yar Khan** [1741-1745] **Abul Mansur Safdar Jang** [1745-1748]

NOTE 10

Supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur

Under the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, Iftikar Khan tortured many Pandits and converted them forcibly to Islam. Seizing of pretty women and making them as gifts to the to the conquerors for their harems became a rampant practice. Some Pandits went to Amarnath for invoking the mercy of Shiva. One of them is stated to have seen Shiva in a dream who advised to approach Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru for help. Following this some Kashmiri Pandits approached him at Anantpur. Guru Teg Bahadur is known to have told them to meet Aurangzeb and tell him that they were prepared to convert themselves to Islam if Teg Bahadur gets converted first. Aurangzeb agreed and Kashmiri Pandits were safely sent home. Guru Teg Bahadur was called to Delhi. He spurned the idea of conversion in front of Auranzeb. As a consequence of this, he was beheaded.



Kashmiri Pandits before Guru Teg Bahadur

NOTE 11

Unabated suffering of Bhattas

In spite of their sufferings, some Pandits were given important positions by the rulers. Pandit Tota Ram was the peshkar of Mirza Yusuf Khan, Governor of Kashmir in 1590 A.D. Ali Mardan Khan became Governor from 1641 to 1646. His peshkar was Pandit Mahadev. One Khwaja Mam burnt Mahadev's house and killed many Brahmins. Shah Jehan later punished the offenders.

In 1771 Mula Abdul Nabi alias Muhta Khan as Shaikh-ul-Islam of Kashmir gave instructions to the then Governor, Mir Ahmad Khan for carrying out certain destructive measures against the Pandits. However, this Governor did not comply with these instructions. Muhta Khan's son, Mulla Sharaf-ul-din, continued the persecution of Bhattas. Four Governors were deputed by emperor Muhmmad Shah, one after the other, but they all failed to establish peace in Kashmir. The fifth Governor, Abdul Samad took control in 1786 A.D. and put Mulla Sharaf-ul-din and other 50 insurgents to death.

1748 – 1819 A.D.	**Afghan (Pathan) Rule** **Abdulla Khan Ishk Agasi** [1748-1749] **Radja Sukh Jivan Mal** [1749-1750] **Abdulla Khan Kabuli** [1750-1762] **Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamzai** [1762-1763] **Buland Khan Bamzai** [1763-1764] **Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamzai** (restored) [1764-1765] **Jang Mohammed Khan** [1765] **Lal Khan Hattak** [1765-1766] **Fakirulla Kanth** [1767] **Nur-ud-Din Khan Bamzai** (re-restored) [1767-1770] **Lal Khan Hattak** (restored) [1770-1771] **Mir Ahmed Khan** (restored) [1771] **Amir Khan Javansher** [1771-1778] **Haji Karim Dad Khan** [1778-1781] **Azad Khan** [1781-1785] **Madad Khan** [1785-1786] **Abdul Samad** [1786] **Mirdad Khan** [1786-1788] **Juma Khan Alokzai** [1788-1792]

	Mir Hazar Khan [1792-1794] **Rahmaulla** [1794] **Kifayat Khan** [1794-1795] **Arslan Khan** [1795] **Sher Mohammad Khan** [1795] **Abdulla Khan** [1795-1796] **Vakil Khan** [1796-1799] **Atta Mohammad Khan** [1799-1812] **Azim Khan** [1812-1819] **Jabbar Khan** [1819]

NOTE 12

Reign of terror

The above mentioned period was one of the darkest periods in the annals of the Kashmiri Pandits. It was a period of unparalleled genocides, brutal killings, destruction and arson. During those days they had to face innumerable miseries in their day to day lives. They lived in abject terror and poverty because everything they had acquired was snatched away from them. It was a drama of untold and unabated atrocities. Not only their lives were forfeited but even the freedom of choosing their way of life, their dresses, their religious rituals and festivals was denied to them. The saga of their persecution during Afghan rule even surpassed the days of bloodbath and destruction of their places of worship that had taken place during the invasion of Zulqadir Khan and Sultan Sikandar in the 14th century.

NOTE 13

Exodus-II of Bhattas

The second exodus of the bulk of the Bhatta community took place during the Afghan rule which, though was beneficial to some of them individually, nevertheless, resulted in the snapping of their cultural links with their land of birth. The greatest victim of the Exodus II was their mother tongue.The migrants adopted the culture of those places where they settled down. They became strangers to the very people who were left behind in Kashmir.

1819-1846 A.D.	**Sikh rule** **Mir Divan Chand** [1819] **Divan Moti Ram** [1819-1821] **Hari Singh Nalva** [1821-1825] **Divan Moti Ram** (restored) [1825-1827] **Divan Kripa Ram** [1827-1831] **Bhim Singh Ardali** [1831-1832] **Sher Singh** [1832-1834] **Mian Singh** [1834- 1841 **Vazir Zoravar Singh** [1841-1842]
	Shekh Muhi-ud-Din [1842-1845] **Shekh Imad-ud-Din** [1845-1846] Although the blood bath of Bhattas abated, the 27 years of Sikh rule was uneventful. During this period the Bhattas were in a convalescent mode. However, the damage done to their cultural heritage was colossal.
1846-1947 A.D,	**Dogra rule** **Lull in the storm** **Ghulab Singh** (in Jammu 1822-1856) and after having taken over Kashmir [1846-1856] **Dependency of Great Britain** [1857-1948] **Ranbir Singh** [1857-1885] **Pratap Singh** [1885-1925] **Hari Singh** [1925-1948]

NOTE 14

The advent of Dogra Rule

Dogra Rule in Kashmir is linked with Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu taking over as the sovereign ruler of the area comprising the regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the year 1846 A.D. With this, the atrocities suffered by the Kashmiri Brahmins (Bhattas) came to an end. Thus, there was a lull in the storm (which had unabatedly blown during the previous five centuries), between 1846 and 1947 in the lives of Kashmiris in general and Bhattas in particular. During the early period of this lull the victimized Bhatta community was busy in licking the wounds inflicted upon it in the past. Besides the obliteration of ancient heritage, the damage to their vibrant and rich way of life inherited by them in the milieu of the intellectual brilliance of their ancestors was colossal.

Exodus-III of Kashmiri Bhattas

As a Consequence of invasion of Kashmir by Pakistani raiders in October 1947 and the plunder and killings perpretrated by them, the Bhattas migrated to Delhi and neighbouring areas.

1947-1990 A.D. and on-wards	**Emergence of voices seeking for independence for the State of Jammu & Kashmir from India and Pakistan followed by intrusion of Terrorism (orchestrated from across its borders) into the Valley**

NOTE 15

Exodus – IV of Kashmiri Bhattas

Due to advent of above forces as well as events ensuing therefrom, fearing their lives, almost the entire Kashmiri Pandit community, once again, in the year 1990 fled en-mass from the Valley to Jammu, Delhi and other parts of India.

Appendix - 2

Gotra system of Kashmiri Pandits (Bhattas) and its Linkage with Eponymous Rishis

According to Purusothama Pandit, Gotra is the whole group of persons descended from any one of the eponymous seven Rishis: *Jamadagni, Gautama, Bharadvaj, Atri, Vishvamitra, Kashyapa & Vashistha* in addition to the Gotra of *Agastia*.

According to Chintsalrao all the Dvijas (twice born) i.e. *Brahmins, Kshtriyas* and *Vaishas* are descended from the four eminent Rishis supposed to be sons of Brahma and that the existing distinctions of caste among them are of latest origin.

These rishis are: *(i) Bhrighu (ii) Angiras (iii) Marichi (iv) Atri (v) Palaha (vi) Pulastya (vii) Vashistha*. However, the Rishis mentioned at *(v)* & *(vi)* above are said to belong to Rakshasas and Pisachas clans and, as such, have been excluded from the Gotra eponymous tradition. It is said that Vashistha died and appeared again as a descendent of the Marichi which resulted in eight original Rishi origins.

BRAHMA

↓

Bhrigu	**Angiras**	**Marichi**	**Atri**
↓	↓	↓	↓
Jamadgani	↓	↓	↓
	Bharadvaj	↓	↓
	Gautama	↓	↓
		Kashyapa	Atri
		Vashistha	Vishvamitra
		Agastya	

The above eight designated families of each of the above four Rishis are known as Gotra-Karas. The original Rishis: Jamadgani, Bharadvaj, Gautama, Kashyapa, Vashistha, Atri and Vishvamitra are known as the legendary Saptarishes.

In addition to the above eight families, ten more families came into existence and they consisted of those Brahmins who had earlier followed the profession of Kshatriya and later became Brahmins again and followed either Bhrigu or Angiras. These families came to be known as *Kevalas* (isolated Bhorgavas) or *Angirasas* and were permitted to marry with all other families. These are :-

1. Vithahavya, 2. Mitraya, 3. Sunaka, 4. Vena (followers of Bhrigu)
5. Rathitara, 6. Maudgalya, 7. Vishnurviddha, 8. Harita,
9. Kanva and 10. Sankriti. (followers of Angiras)

According to Chintsalrao, *Gotra* means a family or a caste. *Pravara* literally means a call or a summons. Every Brahmin is supposed to pronounce the name of his important ancestors who were the founders of his family. The latest important Rishi from whom he descends is known as the *Gotra Rishi* or *Gotra-Kara* and the ancestors of that Rishis, whose names he is also bound to pronounce, are known as *Pravara Rishis*.

On examining the list of Pravaras and Gotra Rishis of Kashmiri Bhattas, it appears that out of the above list of Kevalas, Mitrayu, Sunaka and Maudgalya form part of this list.

Different families pronounce the names of different members of their ancestors even though they belong to one and the same family, For example:

A	B	C
Bhargava	Chyavana	Apnavana

(where B & C are Gotra Rishis & A is the Pravara Rishi).

The order of pronouncement of Gotra Rishis and Pravara Rishis is not uniform. Sometimes the order of pronouncement can be as follows:

C	B	A
Svamina	Gautama	Bhardvaja

(where C & B are Gotra Rishis and A is the Pravara Rishi)

The order can also be as follows:

C	A	B
Svamina	Bhardvaja	Kaushika

(where C & B are the Gotra Reshes and A is the Pravara Reshi)

There can be more than two Gotra Rishis also, but the Pravara Rishi is supposed to be only one, such as in :

B	C	A	D	E
DEV	SVAMINA	GAUTAMA	KAUSHIKA	MAUDGALYA

(where B , C , D , E are Gotra Reshes and A is the Pravara Reshi)

The whole literature on the Gotra-Pravara is mostly contained in Asvalayana, Apasthamha and Bandhayana or the Sutras and Matsya-Purana. However, Puroshotam Pandit, in his "Gotra-Pravara Manjari" also includes Katyana and Laugakshi Sutras. The Laugakshi Sutra is followed by Kashmiri Pandits. According to the Laugakshi Sutra the names of the Gotra-Karas are :

1. Gautama, 2. Bharadvaja, 3. Vishvamitra, 4. Vashistha, 5. Kashyapa, 6. Atri and 7. Agastya.

However, the rest of the systems for the Gotra Pravara are the same as given by Chintsalrao. The list of Pravaras found in among the list of Gotras of Kashmiri Pandits are given hereafter. The list of Gotras

and Pravaras in which none of the eponymous Rishis mentioned above are present have also been indicated in the same list. In this list there are at least 30 Gotra/ Pravara Rishis who do not appear in the traditional list. These appear to be the Rishis belonging to Kashmir proper.

Pravara Rishis, apart from Gotra-Karas mentioned above, such as Dhaumanya and 30 other Gotras, including *Pala* and *Deva*, appear to be mainly restricted to Kashmir. This shows that about 16 % of the total exogamous Gotras of Kashmir Bhattas are peculiar to Kashmir and show a distinct indigenous lineage.

On examining the list of Gotra Rishis and Pravara Rishis of Bhattas it is observed that there are some Gotra and Pravara Rishis who belong to Rigvedic period, while some others belong to Yajurveda/ Samveda period and the information about the rest is not available.

The list of Rishis mentioned in *The History of Sanskrit Literature* by C.V.Vaidya has been accordingly incorporated in the list of Gotras given in this Appendix.

Pandit Anand Koul, in his book, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, has drawn a list of 199 exogamous Gotras (actually the number of exogamous Gotras is 189) pertaining to Kashmiri Pandits along with their list of each Kram or Nick-name (numbering 176) corresponding to each Gotra.

However, I have rearranged the above lists and the format and classified them not only according to Gotras but also as per their Pravaras given above.

It may be noted that *Pala* or *Palaha* & *Dhaumaniyava* appear to be Gotra Rishis which are typically indigenous to Kashmir.

Pandit Anand Kaul in his book, *The Kashmiri Pandit*, says :
"Originally there existed only six Gotras viz: Dhattatreya, Bhardvaja, Paladeva, Aupamanyava, Maudgalya and Dhaumyayana....."

On examining the list of Gotras and Pravara Rishis, it appears that the above mentioned proposition does not at all appear to be correct. Moreover, it is at variance with the aforesaid traditional list of Eponymous Sapta Rishis i.e. Atri, Bhardvaja, Vasishta, Gautama, Vishvamitra, Kashyapa and Agastya.

The actual position of the above referred eponymous Rishis mentioned by Pandit Anand Kaul, in so far as Kashmiri Pandits are concerned, is discussed as follows:

1. Dattatrya

There appears to be a basic misconception that Dattatrya was the name of the eponymous Sapta Rishi. The name of this Rishi is Atri and not Dattatrya. The traditional literature clearly indicates that Datta was actually the son of Atri. Dhattatrya was a sage in the genealogical line of Atris and not the eponymous Rishi of the Saptha Rishis.

Regarding the Pravara Rishi *Atri* of the Gotras of Kashmiri Brahmins, the Gotra list in which *Atri* is the Pravara Reshi has been re-drawn by me as given below and the same adds up to 19, i.e. about 11 % of the total exogamous Gotras. This list includes those Gotras in which *Atri* is the Pravara Reshi but have not been shown under *Dattatrya Kauls* by Pandit Anand Kaul.

2. Bhardvaja

The number of Gotras of Kashmiri Brahmins under this Pravara Rishi has also been redrawn which includes those Gotras which have Bhardvaja as their Pravara Reshi. The total number is 20, i.e. about 11 % of the total exogamous Gotras.

3. Paladeva

Although I have tried to find out the genealogy of this supposed Pravara Reshi, but it appears there was no Pravara Rishi with this name. However, Rishi *Palaha* is found in the list of Rishis supposed to be earlier to the Saptareshis which are: 1. Bhrigu, 2. Angiras, 3. Marichi, 4. Atri, 5. Palaha, 6. Pulastya and 7. Vashishta.

As has been mentioned earlier, the descendents of Rishis, *Palaha* and *Pulastya* in the ancient period were supposed to have been removed from the traditional Gotra-Karas and were nicknamed as *Rakshasas* and *Pisachas*, respectively.

Paladeva actually should not be treated as the name of a single Rishi. *Pala* and *Deva* are the names of two different Rishis. Here *Pala* actually refers to *Palaha* of the above mentioned traditional Pravara Reshes and *Deva* (who appears to be a Vedic Rishi) is already included in the list of Gotra Rishis of Kashmir.

4. Aupamanyava

The number of Gotras in which *Aupamanyava* is the Pravara Rishi is 15, i.e. about 9 % of the total exogamous Gotras. The total number of Gotras, in which *Aupamanyava* is present both as Pravara and as a Gotra Rishi is 22, i.e. 13 % of the total exogamous Gotras. However, although *Aupamanyava* is shown as Pravara Rishi in some Gotras, it may be of interest to know that *Aupamanyava*, who is not a Saptarishi, is himself genealogically a descendent of Saptarishi, Vasishta.

5. Maudgalya

The number of Gotras in which *Maudgalya* is the Pravara Rishi is only three. The total number of Gotras in which it is present both as a Pravara Rishi as well as a Gotra Rishi is five. *Maudgalya* is

genealogical descendent of Sapta Rishi *Atri.*

6. Dhaumyayana

The total number of Gotras in which *Dhaumyayana*, both as Gotra Rishi and Pravara Rishi, appears is only two. There appears to be no genealogical linkage of *Dhaumyayana* with any of the Sapta Reshes.

It is therefore obvious that the supposed proposition that originally there were only six Gotras (i.e. Dattatrya, Bhardvaja, Paladeva, Aupamanyava, Maudgalya and Dhaumanya) appears to be completely erroneous. On perusal of the entire list of exogamous Gotras it will be observed that there is hardly any indication of the sizable presence of Pala-Deva, Maudgalya and Dhaumyayana either as Pravara Rishis or as Gotra Rishis. However, the presence of high percentage of Gotra -karas of Atri and Bhardvaja (as Sapta Reshes) indicates a sizable linkage with the ancestors of Kashmiri Brahmins.

The presence of *Aupamanyava*, both as Pravara or as a Gotra Rishi, is also significant. Although this Rishi does not belong to the traditional Pravara Sapta Reshes, his linkage with the ancestry of Kashmiri Brahmins appears to be remarkable in that he is considered to be a descendent of Vashishta.

Nick-names & Gotras of Bhattas

Gotras of Kashmir Sarasvat Brahmins (Alphbetical order)

	Nickname	Gotra Pravara (Principal ancestoral Rishi of each Rishi family) is indicated in word/s appearing in capital letters	Followers of Solar Bhanumasi (B) or Lunar Malmasi (M) Calendars	Rigvedic (RV) / Yajurvedic (YV) Lineage
A	Aima	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Ambardar	Pata Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
B	Babu	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Badam	Swamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Badgami	Deva Kucha ATRI	M	RV, YV
	Bakaya	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Bakshi	Svamina Vasishta BHARADVAJ	M	RV
	Bakshi	Dhar VARSHAGANYA	B	-
	Bali	Svamina BHARGAVA	M	RV
	Bandaar	Kanth Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Bangi	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Bangru	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Barbuz	VARSHAYANI	M	-
	Bataphalu	Deva SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Battiv	Svamina BHARGAVA	M	RV
	Bazari	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Bazaz	Swamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Bazaz	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Bhan	Deva GARGYA	M	RV, YV
	Bhan	Raj Bhut Laugakshi DEVALA	M	YV
	Bhandari	Vasishta Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Bhat	Svamina Kaushika BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	Dhar KAPISTHALA	M	-
	Bhat	Svamina Vatsya AUPAMANYAVA	M	RV
	Bhat	Deva GAUTAMA	M	RV, YV
	Bhat	Svamina Vasishta BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	Vasishta BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	Vasa Aupamanyava Laugakshi VASISHTA	M	RV, YV
	Bhat	Dat Dat Shalan KAUTSA	M	RV

	Bhat	Deva BHARADVAJA	M	RV, YV
	Bhat	Deva KAUSHIKA	M	RV, YV
	Bhat	Kanth KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Bhat	Kash AUPAMANYAVA	M	-
	Bhat	Mitra SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Bhat	Nanda KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Bhat	Raj Datt Atri Shalan KAUTSA	M	RV
	Bhat	Kautsa ATRI	M	RV
	Bhat	Kaushika BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	Sharman BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	SHANDALYA BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Bhat	Sharman KAUTSA	M	RV
	Bhat	Svamina SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Bhuni	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Bindri	Vasa Deva Pala GARGYA	B	RV
	Bira	Pata Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Bradi	Deva Kashyapa Maudgalya KASHYAP	M	RV, YV
	Bradi	Dev Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Braru	Pata Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Breth	Kanth Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Buju	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Buju	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	YV
	Bumchunt	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Buni	Svamina MAUDGALYA	B	RV
C	Chacha	Pata Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Chacha	Ratra BHARGAVA	M	RV
	Chaghat	Pata Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Chaka	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Chakan	Svamina GAUTAMA Gosha Vasa Aupamanyava	M	RV
	Chaña	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Chandra	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Chandru	Karchanda SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Charanghu	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Chillum	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Chuku	Svamina GAUTAMA Laugakshi	M	RV, YV
	Chithai	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Chottu	Svamina GAUTAMA Laugakshi	M	RV, YV
	Choudhri	Artha Varshaganya SHANDALYA	M	RV
D	Dandar	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Dangar	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV

	Dassu	Kanth KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Deva	Deva BHARADVAJA Kaushika	M	RV, YV
	Dewani	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Dhar	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Dout	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Drabi	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Duda	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	
	Durani	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Duru	Raj SHANDALYA	M	RV
F	Fata	Svamina GAUTAMA Laugakshi	B	RV, YV
	Fehrist	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Fotedar	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
G	Gadar	Deva BHARADVAJA	M	
	Gaddu	Sharman ATRI	M	RV
	Gadwali	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Gagar	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Galikrapa	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Ganju	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Garyali	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Ghasi	Svamina Vas ATRI	M	RV
	Gigu	Svamina AUPAMANYAVA	M	-
	Giru	Bhuta Aupamanyava Shalan KUAYANA	M	-
	Gurut	Swamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
H	Hakachar	Raj KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Hakh	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Hakim	Deva GAUTAMA Laugakshi	M	RV, YV
	Handu	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Handu	Svamina Vasishta BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Handu	Vasista BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Handu	Mitra ATRI Kashyapa	M	RV
	Hangal	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	
	Hapa	ATRI Bharagava	M	RV
	Haswal	Kantha Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Hukhu	Dev VASISHTA	M	RV
	Hukhu	Svamina Vasishta BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Hukhu	Vasishta BHARADVAJA	M	RV
J	Jala	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Jalali	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Jan	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Jatu	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Jawansher	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV

	Jinsi	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Jogi	Dhar SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Jota	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
K	Kachru	Dhar VARSHAGANYA	B	
	Kachru	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Kadalabuju	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Kak	Datt ATRI	B	RV
	Kak	Svamina GAUTAMA	B/M	RV
	Kak	Deva PARASHARA	M	RV
	Kak	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Kakapuri	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Kalla	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Kallu	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Kallu	Deva BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV, YV
	Kallu	Dev AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Kallu	Svamina Bharadvaja Vas ATRI	M	RV
	Kalpush	Deva Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	M	RV, YV
	Kalu	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Kalu	Dev AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Kalu	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Kandar	Svamina MAUDGALYA	B	RV
	Kandhari	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Kanth	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Kar	Karchanda SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Kar	Deva Kanth KASHYAPA	M	RV, YV
	Karawani	Deva SHANDALYA	M	RV, YV
	Karihalu	Svamina Gautama BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Karnel	Varshayani	M	
	Kasab	Dat Dat Shalan KAUTSA	M	RV
	Kashgari	Rishi KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Kashu	Dev AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Kasid	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Kathju	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Kaul	Datt ATRI	B	RV
	Kaul (Kulin)	Svamina Rishi Kanya GARGYA	M	RV
	Kaw	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B	RV
	Kaw	Kantha Dhaumanya	B	RV, YV
		Laugakshi GAUTAM		-
	Kem	Dev Vishvamitra VARSHAGANYA	M	RV, YV
	Kemdar	Svamina Gautam BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Keni	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV

	Keni	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Khaibri	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Khanakatu	Svamina Hasya DEVASYA	M	RV
	Khar	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV
	Khari	Dat VASA	M	-
	Khari	Sazval VAS	M	RV
	Khashu	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Khaumush	Dat Dat Shalan KAUTSA	M	RV
	Khazanchi	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Khod	Raj KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Khoru	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Khosa	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Khoshu	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B	RV
	Khurdi	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Khurdi	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Kichlu	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Kissu	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Kokru	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Kotar	Ratra VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Kothedar	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Kukru	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B	RV
	Kukru	Svamina Kaushika BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Kutsru	Svamina BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Kyani	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
L	Labru	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Labru	Svamina GAUTAMA SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Labru	Svamina Kanth KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Ladakhi	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Lala	Svamina MAUDGALYA	B	RV
	Langar	Svamina Vas GARGYA	M	RV
	Langar	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Lange	Svamina VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Lattu	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Lidi	Dhar KAPISTHALA	M	-
M	Machama	Svamina GARGYA	M	RV
	Madan	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Mala	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Malik	Dat Dat Shalan KAUTSA	M	RV
	Malla	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B	RV
	Mam	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Mam	Paladeva Vas GARGYA	B	RV

	Mandal	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Mantapuri	Deva LAUGAKSHI	M	YV
	Mantu	Kara SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Manwotu	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Mattu	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Mattu	Ratra Vishvamitra AGASTYA	M	RV
	Mazari	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Mekhzin	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Meva	Dev AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Meva	Dev AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Mich	Dhar Kapisthala UPAMANUVA	M	
	Mirakhur	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Miskin	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV
	Misri	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Misri	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA		RV
	Misri	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Miyan	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV
	Mogal	Sharman KAUTSA	M	RV
	Mogal	Sharman KAUTSA		RV
	Mota	Dhar Deva Shalana KAPI	M	YV
	Moza	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Muhtasib	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Muhtasib	Kanth Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Muj	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Muki	Wardhatta Shalana KUCHA		RV
	Mukka	Shalan Kautsa Sharman Gusha WATSYA	B	RV
		Aupamanyaya		
	Munga	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	M	RV
	Munshi	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV
	Mushran	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
N	Nagari	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Nagari	Kaushika BHARADVAJA	M	RV
	Nakhasi	Ishwar KUSHA	M	RV
	Naqib	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Nari	Svamina SHANDALYA	M	RV
P	Padar	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Padi	Svamina Gan KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Padora	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Pahalvan	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Pandit	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Pandit	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA Deva Ratra Parwara	B	RV, YV

	Pandit	Deva LAUGAKSHI	M	YV
	Pandit	Nanda Kaushika BHARADVAJA	M	RV, YV
	Pandit	Deva AUPAMANYAVA	M	YV
	Pandit	Vatsya Gusha AUPAMANYAV	M	RV
	Panzu	Pat Svamina KAUSHKA	B	RV
	Parikala	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Parimu	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Partazi	Raj Datt ATRI	M	RV
	Partazi	Raj Datt ATRI	M	-
	Patar	Bhava Kapisthala KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Peshen	Bhuta Vasa Aupamanyava LAUGAKSHI	M	RV, YV
	Peshin	Bhuta Vatsya AUPAMANYAVA	B	RV
	Peshin	Bhuta Aupamanyava Vatsya LAUGAKSHI	M	RV, YV
	Piala	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Pir	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B/M	RV
	Purbi	Deva GAUTAMA	M	RV, YV
	Put	Pala Deva Vasa GARGYA	B/M	RV
Q	Qazi	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
R	Rafiz	Datt ATRI	B	RV
	Raina	ATRI Shalan Kucha Swamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Raina	Datt Sharman Kantha KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Raina	Datt Sharman Kantha RASHYARA		RV
	Rangateng	VASISHTA	M	RV
	Raval	Ishwar KUSHA	M	RV
	Razdan	Kantha Dhaumanya Laugakshi Gautam	B	RV, YV
	Razdan	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Razdan	DHAUMANYA	M	-
	Razdan	Kantha KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Razdan	Svamina GAUTAMA SHANDALYA	M	RV
	Razdan	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Razdan	Svamina GAUTAMA Shalan Kucha ATRI	M	RV
S	Sabani	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Sabani	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Saed	Mitra Svamina Kaushika ATRI	M	RV
	Safaya	Dhar VARSHAGANYA	B	-
	Safaya	Dhar Vasak SHANDALYA	B	RV, SV
	Safaya	Deva Varshanganya SHANDALYA	B	RV, YV
	Sahib	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Salman	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Salman	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Sapru	Dipat Saman AUPAMANYAVA	M	-

	Sav	Sharman KAUTSA	M	RV
	Sazawal	Datt VARSHAGANYA	M	-
	Sazawal	Datt VASA	-	-
	Shah	Kantha Daumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Shair	Kantha Daumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Shal	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Shali	Dhar VARSHAGANYA	B	-
	Shanglu	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Shanglu	Raj VASISHTA	M	RV
	Sharga	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Shoga	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Shora	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Sibbu	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Sikh	Svamina ATRI	M	RV
	Singhari	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Sopori	Pala Deva Vas GARGYA	M	RV
	Sopori	Deva VASISHTA	M	RV
	Sultan	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Sulu	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Sum	Svamina VASA GARGYA	M	RV
T	Taku	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Taku	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Tangan	Kantha KASHYAPA	M	RV
	Tarivala	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Tava	Svamina GAUTAMA	B	RV
	Teng	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Thakur	Svamina KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Thakur	Bhuta Vasa AUPAMANYAVA Laugakshi	M	RV, YV
	Thalatsur	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Thalatsur	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Thapal	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Thapal	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Thela	Sharman KAUTSA	M	-
	Thogan	Deva PARASHARA	M	RV
	Thussu	Svamina Vas ATRI	B/M	RV
	Tilwan (Kaul)	Shalan KAUTSA Sharman Gusha	B	RV
		WATSYA AUPAMANYAVA		
	Tikku	Svamina BHARADVAJA	B/M	RV
	Tota	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Trakari	Ratra Vishvamitra VASISHTA	M	RV

	Tritsha	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Tritshal	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Tshut	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Tsrungu	Deva Vardhatta Shalan KAUSHIKA	B	RV, YV
	Tsul	Svamina Gautam ATRI	M	RV
	Tulsi	Deva Parashara	M	RV
	Tur	Svamina LAUGAKSHI	B	YV
	Turi	Svamina GAUTAMA LAUGAKSHI	M	RV, YV
U	Ugra	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Unt (pronounced as 'oont')	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
V	Vaishnavi	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV
	Vanger	Dev Vishvamitra VARSHAGANYA	M	RV, YV
	Vantu	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Variku	Bhava AUPAMANYAVA	M	RV
	Vichari	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
W	Waguzari	Dhar BHARADVAJA	B	RV
	Wakhlu	Deva VASISHTA	M	RV, YV
	Wallu	Svamina Vatsya AUPAMANYAVA	M	RV
	Wanchu	Pat Svamina KAUSHKA	B	RV
	Wangan	Kanth Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Wanikhan	Bhava Kapisthala AUPAMANYAVA	B	RV
	Wat	Kantha Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Watal	Svamina KAUSHIKA	M	RV
	Wattal	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA Deva Ratra Parwara	B	RV, YV
	Waza	Svamina Vas ATRI	M	RV
	Waza	Pat Svamina KAUSHKA	B	RV
	Wufa	Pat Svamina KAUSHKA	B	RV
	Wuthu	Dhar BHARADVAJ	B	RV
Y	Yachh	Deva BHARADVAJ	B	RV, YV
	Yachh	Deva PARASHARA	M	RV, YV
Z	Zamindar	Datt ATRI (Kaul)	B	RV
	Zadu	Bhava KAPISTHALA	B	RV
	Zahi	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Zalpuri	Bhuta Vasa AUPAMANYAVA Laugakshi	M	RV, YV
	Zari	Svamina GAUTAMA	M	RV
	Zari	Kanth Dhaumanya Laugakshi GAUTAMA	B	RV, YV
	Zaru	Deva BHARADVAJA	B	RV, YV
	Zaru	Rishi Kavi GARGYA	M	RV
	Zithu	Pat Svamina KAUSHIKA	B	RV

	Zitshoo	Ratra BHARGAVA	M	RV
	Zitu	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
	Zotan	Svamina MAUDGALYA	M	RV
Other Gotras corresponding to which no nick names are identified.				
		Bharadvaj	M	
		Bhava Atri	M	
		Bhava Devalya	M	
		Bhava Kapisthala Manana	M	
		Bhuta Aupamanyava Laugakshi	M	
		Bhuta Laugakshi Dhaumyayana Gautama	M	
		Bhuta Laugakshi Gautama	M	
		Bhuta Raja Laugakshi Dhaumyayana Gautama	M	
		Chhanda Shandalya	M	
		Datta Kaushika	M	
		Deva Chahanda Shandalya	M	
		Deva Patsvamina Aupamanyava Kaushika	M	
		Deva Rishi Kaushika	M	
		Deva Sharmanya Kautsa	M	
		Deva Svamina Gautama Kaushika Maudgalya	M	
		Deva Vasistha Bharadvaj	M	
		Dhar Bharadvaja Paladeva Vasagargya	M	
		Dhar Sharman Kautsa	M	
		Mitra Atri	M	
		Mitra Kaushika	M	
		Raj Som Shandalya	M	
		Rama Ratra Vashvamitra Agastya	M	
		Rama Ratra Vashvamitra Vasistha	M	
		Ratna Mandgalya	M	
		Ratra Visvamitra Agastya Aupamanyava	M	
		Shalan Kayana Atri	M	
		Sharman Kanth Kashyapa	M	
		Sharman Kaushika Shandalya	M	
		Shila Shandalya	M	
		Soma Gargya	M	
		Soma Vatsa Gargya	M	
		Svamina Bharadvaja Dhuni Kashyapa	M	
		Gautama Laugakshi Devali		
		Svamina Bharadvaja Kaushika	M	
		Svamina Bharadvaja Kaushika Vatsa	M	
		Svamina Bharadvaja Shandalya	M	
		Svamina Bharadvaja Vatsa Atri	M	

		Svamina Deva Gargya	M	
		Svamina Gautama Kaushika	M	
		Svamina Kautsa Atri	M	
		Svamina Koul (Kulin) Vatsya	M	
		Svamina Laugakshi	M	
		Svamina Maudgalya Parashara	M	
		Svamina Parashara	M	
		Svamina Vara Mitra Vatsya Guna Kaushika	M	
		Svamina Vas	M	
		Svamina Vasa Gulak	M	
		Svamina Vasishta Vatsya Laugakshi	B	
		Svamina Vasista	M	
		Svamina Vatsya	M	
		Vasa Aupamanyava Laugakshi	M	
		Vatsa Atri	M	
		Vishram Bharadvaja	M	
		Vishram Gargya	M	
		Vishram Shaunaka	M	

Appendix - 3

Festivals of Bhattas

Shukla means the bright half of a Lunar Month.
Krishna means the dark half of a Lunar Month.

S. No.	Name Of Festival	Date		Particulars/ Events
		Lunar Month	English Month/s	
1.	Navreh	Chaitra Shukla Pratipada (1st day)	March-April	New year's day. (Saptareshi era) is celebrated by wearing of new clothes, offering *Taher* (yellow cooked rice) and visiting Hariparbat (Pradakshan).
2.	Zang Trai	Chaitra Shukla Tretiya (3rd day)	March-April	Ladies meet and married daughters visit their parents house.
3.	Durga Ashtami	Chaitra & Ashvin Shukla (8th day)	March-April & Sept-Oct.	Kheerbavani Yatra (Uma Jyanti)
4.	Ganga Ashtmi	Chaitra & Ashad (8th day)	March-April & June-July	Naran Nag Yatra
5.	Ram Navmi	Chaitra & Ashvin Shukla (9th day)	March-April & Sept-Oct.	Badrakali yatra

6.	Baisakhi	Vaishak Krishna (1st day)	April-May	Guptaganga Yatra
7.	Reshipir Shradh	Vaishak Krishna Shasti (6th day)	April-May	Obesiance to saint Reshipir at his abode at Batayar
8.	Ganeshi-Choadah	Vaishak Shukla Chuterdashi (14th day)	April-May	Ganpatyar yatra.
9.	Badhrakali Jayanti	Jeshta Krishna (11th day)	May-June	Badrakali Yatra
10.	Harishvar Yatra	Jeshta Krishna/ Amavasi (15th day)	May-June	Harishvar yatra
11.	Nandkeshvar Yatra. Vatsavtri	Jestha Krishna. Amavasi (15th day)	May-June	Sumbal yatra
12.	Jeshta Ashtami	Jeshta Shukla (8th day)	May-June	Tulmul yatra
13.	Nirjala Ekadashi	Jeshta Shukla (11th day)	May-June	Fast
14.	Rupa Bhavani Jayanti	Jeshta Shukla Purnamashi (15th day)	May-June	Festival at Nawa Kadal.
15.	Hara Ashtami	Ashad Shukla (8th day)	June-July	Tulmul yatra
16.	Hara Navmi	Ashad Shukla (9th day)	June-July	Chakreshvara (Hari-Parbat) yatra
17.	Loka Bhavan	Dvadashi (10th day)	June-July	Loka Bhavan Yatra
18.	Hara Chudah	Ashad Shukla Chutardashi (14th day)	June-July	Jawala Bhagvati Yatra at Khrew

19.	Nag-Panchimi	Shravan Shukla Panchmi (5th day)	July-August	Panzat (Verinag) Yatra
20.	Gudhar yatra	Shravan Shukla Panchimi (5th day)	July-August	Gudhar (Godavari) Yatra
21.	Shravan-Bah	Shravan Shukla Dvadashi (12th day)	July-August	Degom (Shupian) Yatra
22.	Shravan Punim	Shravan Poornima (15th day)	July-August	a) Amarnath Yatra b) Mahadev c) Shankerchariya Yatra & fast.
23.	Janam Ashtami	Bhado Krishna Ashtami (8th day)	August-Sept.	Puja (worship and ceremony) is offered to Lord Krishna at midnight
24.	Vinayak Choram	Bhado Shukla Chaturthi (4th day)	August- Sept.	a) Ganpatyar Yatra b) *Pan* on any day between 1st & 15th Bhado Shukla
25.	Ganga Ashtami	Bhado Shukla Ashtami (8th day)	August- Sept.	Harmukataganga (if Sun in Leo) or Sharda (if Sun not in Leo) yatra. Lalleshwari Jyanti
26.	Gotam Nag Yatra	Bhado Shukla Ekadashi (11th day)	August- Sept.	Gotamnag Yatra

27.	Vetha Truvah	Bhado Shukla Triyodashi (13th day)	August- Sept.	Vetha Vatur Yatra
28.	Anant Chudah	Bhado Shukla Chutardashi (14th day)	Auguat Sept.	Nagabal (Anantnag) Yatra
29.	Pitra-Paksh (Kambir Pach)	Ashvin Krishna (1st to 15th day); i.e till Amavasi)	Sept.-Oct.	Shrada ceremonies are performed during this fortnight
30.	Navratra	Ashvin Shukla (from 1st to 9th day)	Sept.-Oct.	Vegetarianism is observed during this period
31.	Vijay Dashmi (Dussehra)	Ashvin Shukla Dashmi (10th day)	Sept.-Oct.	Festivities.
32.	Deep-Mala (Divali)	Kartik Krishna Amavasi (15th day)	Oct.-Nov.	a) Lighting of Lamps b) Worship of Goddess Lakshmi
33.	Kartik Poornima	Kartik Shukla (15th day)	Oct.-Nov.	Worship of Lord Veshnu; vegetarian food
34.	Mokhda-Ekadashi	Marg Shukla (11th day)	Nov.-Dec.	Fasting is undertaken
35.	Munjhor Akdoh	Posh Krishna Pratipada (1st day)	Dec.-Jan.	Taher (yellow cooked rice) is made and Pooja for Mantrika is conducted.
36.	Maha-Kali Jyanti	Posh Krishna Ashtami (8th day)	Dec.-Jan.	Puja of Mahakali at Fateh Kadal

37.	Anandeshwar Bhairav Jyanti	Posh Krishna Dashmi (10th day)	Dec.-Jan.	Worship of Bhairava
38.	Khechi-Mavas (Yaksha Amavasi)	Posh Krishna Amavasi (15th day)	Dec.-Jan.	Offering of *Kichri* to Yakshas
39.	Sahiben Satam	Maga Krishna Saptami (7th day)	Jan.-Feb.	Yagniya and fast as obesiance to Rupabhavani
40.	Shiv Chaturdashi	Maga Krishna Chaturdashi (14th day)	Jan.-Feb.	Worship of Lord Shiva. Fasting is also undertaken.
41.	Govri Trai (Goveri Tritiya)	Maga Shukla Tritiya (3rd day)	Jan.-Feb.	Presenting of painting/photo & written mantras and shalokas (sacred to goddess saraswati) on paper with hand made paintings to children & new brides by the family Guru.
42.	Bishama Kah	Maga Shukla Ekadashi (11th day)	Jan.-Feb.	Fasting is undertaken.
43.	Kaw Punim	Maga Shukla Poornmashi (15th day)	Jan.-Feb.	Giving food to birds. Preparing *Taher*

SHIVRATRI/HAYRAT FESTIVAL				
44.	Huer Oakdoh to Huer Satam	Phagan Krishna (1st day) to (7th day)	Feb.-March	Cleaning etc. of the houses. Worship at Hari Parbat.
	Huer Aetham Huer Navam, Dyar Daham	(8th day) (9th day) (10th day)		Gathering of near relations.
	Gada Kah	(11th day)		Cooking of fish by non-vegetarians.
	Vagur Bhah Haerche Truvah	(12th day) (13th day)		Vagur filling. Vatuk Puja.
	Salam	(14th day)		in the evening/ night feasts alms giving, celebrations etc.
	Doen Mavas	(15th day)		Visarjan (immersion) of Vatak Nath (Deity; form of Shiva, as an invitee to the house-hold) and distributing of naveed among relations and friends
45.	Tela Ashtami	Phagan Shukla (8th day)	Feb.-March	Lighting of oil lamps inside the compound of the house-hold

46.	Thal Barun Navm	Phagan Shukla (9th day)	Feb.-March	Filling of Thali with paddy or rice and Yemberzal (Narcissus) flowers etc.
47.	Sounth Sankrat	New year day of the next year Chaitra) (Vikrami Era)	March-April	*Buth Wuchhun* [To have the first glimpse of rice-filled thali (plate) in the morning]

Appendix - 4

Ancient Devasthanas (Sacred Sites)

Prthivyam yani tirtham tani tatra naradhipa
Rsy'asramasusambhadham sitatapasukham subham.

O protector of men !

All the sacred places which are on the earth are there (in Kashmir). Abounded with many hermitages of sages, which are pleasant in the heat and the cold, the land is auspiciuos.

Nilmata vii

The valley of Kashmir has been called a veritable heaven on earth. Kalhana calls this land as a *Crest Jewel of the World.* This land of saffron, lofty snow-clad mountains and icy waters abounds in innumerable sacred devasthanas, rivers and hermitages of sages and places of learning. Some of the prominent ones are:

1. Naran Nag (Jeshtarudra or Bhuteshwara)

Location

This ancient shrine, now known as *Narang Nag,* is situated at a distance of 15 kms north-east from Kangan (off the Srinagar - Leh highway) in the Sindh valley. It is 55 kms north-east from Srinagar. The road from Kangan passes over a mountain spur into the Wangat valley where a stream (variously named from ancient times as *Kanakavahini* or *Krainkanadi or Kanknai*) flows, at times in torrents, down this valley.

This stream then has its confluence with river Sindh near Prang. A small hamlet named *Wangat* (known in ancient times as *Vashishta Ashram*) is situated about 10 kms from Kangan and 5 kms before Narang Nag. The waters of Krainkanadi issue forth from the higher reaches of the Gangabal lake situated at an altitude of about 13000 ft. ASL. The holy waters of the Krainkanadi skirt the southern side of Narang Nag temple group (now in ruins); latter being situated on the northern spur of the Butsher mountain.

Description & History

Bhuteshvara or Jyestheshvara or Jyeshtarudra or the modern Naran Nag is a cluster of temple ruins adjacent to an ancient spring called *Sodara*. The whole cluster can be divided into two groups of ruins; one on the western side and the other on the eastern side. These groups are about 600 feet apart. The western side has a main stone temple ruin in the centre with small temples on the northern side. This main temple has been identified by archeologists and historians as Jyestarudra erected by King Lalitaditya (695 A.D.) wherein was located a huge stone Shivalinga. The second group on the eastern side too has a group of ruined temples, the prominent being identified as Jesthesvara or Shiva Bhutesvara and is supposed to have been erected by King Jalauka (son of King Ashoka of Kashmir). This shrine is believed to be one of the most ancient and prominent (1st millennium B.C., according to Kalhana and traditional literature and 3rd century B. C., according to the historians)

Nilmata Purana has extolled this shrine as most holy. It mentions about Haramuktaganga (also known as Uttaramanasa) and the Sodara shrine which is near Bhutesvara temple in the eastern group, as under:

Tesam tapahprabhavena bhaktya ca mama parsada
sodarasya ca nagasya sthanam uttaramanasah
Syayam prapto mahabhaga tatra Ramsyasi sarvada.
Yasmad desat tatha yati daksinena mahanadi
Hiranyini punyajata namna kanakavahini.
Jyesthese vasate bhutair vasa Prakamyati dvija

NP 1113 to 1115

"Due to the effect of their penance and devotion to me, O Parsada, you shall reach Uttaramanasa-the abode of Sodara Naga, and live permanently at the place to the south of which the great river Hiranyini flows, which is possessed of holy water and known as Kanakavahini. The Bhutas live at Jyesthesa, O twice born, live there at your will."

The Nilmata Purana extols this ancient shrine in the following words:

'Snatva tu Sodare Punya driska Bhutesvaram Haram
Jyesthesvaram Nandinam ca ganapatyam avapnuyat'

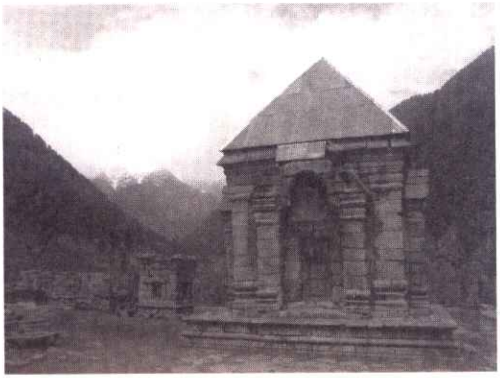
"By seeing Hara Bhutesvara, Jyesthesvara and Nandi after taking bath in the holy Sodara, one may obtain prominence among the ganas."

NP 1124

King Narendraditya had dedicated a permanent endowment of feeding Brahmins at Bhutesvara. King Jalauka had appointed 100 ladies to serve at the shrine as dancers. Sage-King Samdhimat, after abdicating his throne, proceeded to Bhutesvara to spend rest of his life as a Shiva devotee. King Lalitaditya made an offering of 11 crore dinars to the Bhutesvara shrine. The shrine of Bhutesvara is still considered holy. On the 8th day of the bright half of the lunar month of *Chaitra* (March-April) and/or *Ashad* (June-July), which is known as *Gang-Ashtami, a* pilgrimage was made to this shrine. On such a day even the pilgrims to Haramukata Ganga would come down to Bhutesvara and have a bath in the sacred spring of Sodara.

Date of Festival

Gangabal Yatra on the 8th day of the bright-half of the lunar month *Bhadho* (August-September) i.e *Bhadho Shukla Ashtami*



Bhuteshwara Temple at Naran Nag

2. Shankershan Nag, Kuthaer (Kapteshvara or Papshodhana)

Location

This ancient shrine is situated 9 kms from Achabal and 3 kms off the Achabal-Shangas road deep in the Kothar forest (which is about 70 kms south-east of Srinagar). The village of Kothir is near Kothar Pargana (75.18 degrees Longitude & 33.4 degrees Latitude).

Description & History

The shrine consists of a circular spring about 100 ft. in diameter. Originally there were stone steps along the circumference leading to the waters of the spring. There used to be a massive wall round the tank, which is now in a dilapidated condition. Kaptishvara is a holy shrine of repute, which was one of the most popular shrines in

the olden times (before 5th century A.D.). Here *Shiva Kapteshvara* is worshipped under the name of Kapteshvara or Papshodhana, the name is suggestive of Shiva disguising himself in pieces of sandalwood or a log of wood floating on water when the latter recedes in the middle of the lunar month of *Vaisakh* (April-May) every year.

Nilmata Purana has given a detailed description of its origin and sanctity. The following verses contained in Nilmata amply show the glory of the shrine

Ayam ca satatam nandi kastharupam samasthitam
darsanam dasyate nrnam cadanugrahakamyaya
mam ca drstva na yasyanti svasarirena rudratain
kapatena ca dasyam naranam darsanam yada
tada samjnam avapssyani kapastesvara iti uta
toyasya bahulibhavo dese smin brahmanottama

NP V 1144 TO 1146

"My gana as Nandi in the form of wooden log, with the intention of doing them a favour, shall always be visible to the human beings. They would attain *Rudra-hood* with their bodies after seeing this. I shall assume the name of Kaptesvara as I shall manifest myself in this disguise before men. There is plenty of water in this country O best of the Brahamana."

Legend

There is a legend attached to this shrine which says that the water of this spring has healing powers. One legend, which still survives, says that a king from the Deccan named Muchukund, who had become disfigured due to horns growing on his head, got healed by entering the waters of this sacred spring. It is this king who had built the surrounding wall of the tank. However, Kalhana says it was King Bhoja of Malava (1010 to 1063 A.D.) who built the surrounding wall.

3. Gangobheda or Budhbrer

Location

The valley of Kashmir abounds in so many shrines and holy places. But, most of these places are either not known now or have completely been forgotten and gone into oblivion. Amongst places of forgotten shrines *Gangodbheda* or *Bhedadevi Saraswati* or *Budhbrer* (as called now) is one of the most unknown places in contemporary Kashmir.

Attempt to locate this shrine was made by M. A. Stein in 1895 A.D. After his persistent search, he was able to locate this shrine in the deep Bheda forest up the valley of Birnai stream in Kellar block, District Pulawama. He found that the Gangodbheda spring was situated on a plateau in the south-west at a distance of 10 kms from Keller and on top of a hillock, 70 ft. above the level of the valley below with torrents of the Birnai stream just skirting the northern side of the hillock.

The author, after taking the same route as the one taken by Stein, was able to locate this spring in 1983 as this shrine had been completely forgotten by the local Brahmins.

Description & History

A small rivulet, which used to be known as *Abhaya,* according to the Nilmata Purana and the Gangodbheda Mahatmya, trickles down from the north-eastern side of the spring and falls into the Birnai stream. The spring is a square shaped, each side of about 55 ft. in length with an average depth of 4 ft. On the eastern side is a round boulder lying very near to the eastern bank on which two Shiva lingas have been carved in high relief and figurines of Ganga, represented by a woman carrying a pot of water, are found carved on the same boulder. The spring was originally surrounded by stone steps and a

boundary wall, which, in 1983, was in a dilapidated condition.

When the author visited the shrine in September, 1983, i.e. about 88 years after Stein's visit in 1895 A.D., it appeared as if the time had stood still. The condition of the shrine and the surroundings, as described by him, was found exactly the same by the author; the only difference being that the water in the tank had become somewhat turbid due to human neglect.

The main and remarkable features of this ancient shrine are:

1. The level of the water in the spring always remains constant and the excess water does not come out in torrents into the the rivulet *Abhaya*.
2. The very topographical position of the spring (viz. the spring is at the top of a raised ground, high along the natural level of the valley of Birnai, about 70 ft.) is indeed a rare natural phenomenon.
3. There is a legend that the snow does not accumulate in the area contiguous to the spring. This was confirmed by the local people of the area and also mentioned by Stein during his visit to the spring in 1895 A.D. The author also got the same information when he visited the site in 1983 A.D. This is indeed a remarkable natural phenomenon considering the average altitude of the spring being 7800 ft. ASL. and that the heavy snow accumulates in the surrounding areas and valley down below during winter.

Legend

The legend of the shrine, according to the Mahatmya and the Nilmata Purana is that the Rishi Pulastya as a result of his long penance was able to bring Saraswati in the form of *Hamasavageshvari* in the *Bheda* forest (as such also referred to as *Gangodbheda)*. The legend further

states that the goddess Saraswati, as *Hamsavageshvari*, representing her exalted aspect of speech, appeared to Rishi Pulatysa in the form of a Flamingo (Rajhansa; meaning a Swan) on the 8th, 9th, 14th & 15th bright half of lunar month of *Chaitra (March-April)*. Hence, ever since, the goddess Saraswati (in the form also described as *Hamasavageshvari-Bheda)* is worshipped at this spring. It is said that in the olden days a flamingo would appear at the spring of Gangodbheda on the above mentioned auspicious days when devotees would visit it and perform religious rites.

It may be pointed out here that the names *Gangodbheda* or *Bheda Devi* or *Hamasavageshvari-Bheda* connote a specific aspects of goddess *Saraswati*, which is the only shrine in Kashmir, apart from Sharada (which is now in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir on the Line of Control) that is dedicated to the goddess Saraswati. Its importance in ancient days was as great as that of the shrine of Sharada and its mention is noticed in Kalhana's Rajtarangini as well as in the Nilmata Purana.

Nilmata Purana says:

Gangodbheda narah matva Bhedadevisamipatah
Gangasnanaphalam prapya svargaloke mahiyate
avgahya abhayam punyam dasagoda phalam labhet
aujase dharmarajasya snatva tu purato narah

NP V 1359-1360

"One gets the merit of bathing in the Ganga and is honoured in heaven, by taking a bath in Gangodbheda near Bhedadevi one gets merit of gifting ten cows by dipping in the holy Abhaya and one does not reach the state of misery and does obtain the merit of performing vajapeya, if one gets a bath in Aujaba near Dharmaraja."

Esoteric Meaning of Bhedadevi

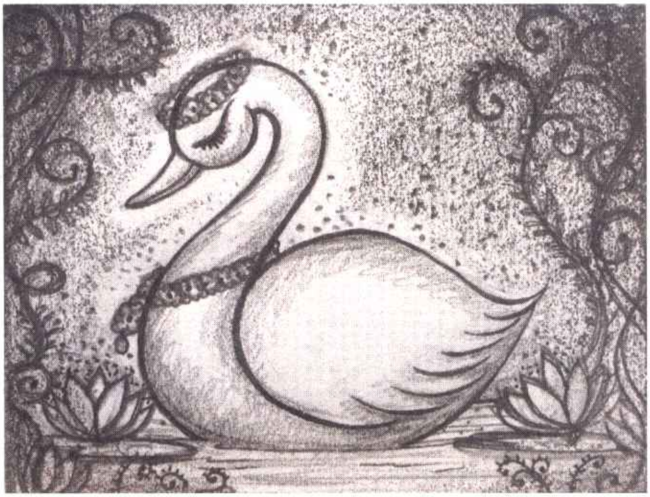
The esoteric significance of the shrine can be summarized as follows:

As has been said above, a swan/flamingo (Rajahansa) would appear at the shrine of Gangodbheda on specific days. The Rajhansa is supposed to be the celestial attendant of Goddess Saraswati. Apart from having a philosophical significance, it is also a symbol of a subtle spiritual truth.

1) Goddess Saraswati represented three powers (*Shaktis*): the power that comes out of: (i) knowledge, learning and wisdom (*Sharda*), (ii) creation of art & music (*Narda*) and (iii) speech (*Vageshwari*). Her celestial attendant, the *Rajhansa*, signifies discriminative knowledge because it is believed that this bird has the unique capability of isolating the cream content from the milk, leaving only its water behind.

2) *Gangodbheda*, as the shrine of *Hamsavageshwari-Bheda* in front of the swan; *Hamsa* or *Rajhansa* represents wisdom, discriminative knowledge and discernment (which in Sanskrit means *Bheda* as well as goddess Saraswati's attribute of the power of speech, referred to as *Vagashwari)* and also signifies dualism (*Bheda*) and monism (*Abheda*) as two sides of the same coin. Thus *Bheda-Abheda* (dualism in monism) is the essential nature of the reality of the World. Dualism (*Bheda*) here means diversity within the general framework of transcendental reality reflecting oneness (*Abheda*). According to Krama School of Kashmir-Shaivism, duality (*Bheda*) in the phenomenal world is, in essence, an expression of its underlying unity with the transcendental world (*Abheda*). Thus, such a representation persuades us to closely relate to the immanent reality without loosing sight of its transcendental aspect. Dual and non-dual concepts, if reckoned in isolation, become irrelevant because one is relative to the other. Through *Bheda* (dualism) one can realize the essence of *Abheda* (oneness). In other

words Gangodbheda as Hamsavaghesvari-Bheda is the symbol of an aspect of Goddess Saraswati in which *Bheda* (duality) merges with the oneness (*Abheda*) of the ultimate reality like the way in which the *Rajhansa*, while enjoying the taste of milk in its wholeness, is, at the same time, able to sift the milk content from the water.



Rajhansa (Flamingo)

4. Sharda

Location

Sharda Tirtha (shrine) was one of the most revered and holy places in Kashmir since ancient times. Kashmir used to be also called *Shardapeth (*the *Abode of Sharda* or the *Abode of Learning)*. This shrine unfortunately now falls within the territory of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and is very near to the Line of Control. The shrine of Sharda is identified with the existing village of Shardi at the confluence of Krishnaganga and Madhumati streams.

Originally this shrine, which now falls within the Karnah Tehsil, was within the Uttar Pargana. The tributaries of Krishnaganga are Madhumati and Kankotri (or Sargan or Saraswati) streams which merge into the Krishnaganga at Sharda. Practically the left bank of this river from the upper Krishnaganga down upto Karnah is along the Line of Control and the right bank falls within the territory of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir.

There used to be two passes over the Karnah mountain range which would lead to the Sharda shrine. The first route used to be from Kupwara to Gusa, then to Hayhom, Rangvatti then would go across the Dranga pass. Then, following the left bank of Krishnaganga, the route leads to Tejavana and then to Ganesh-Ghati and over the Sirahshilla to the confluence of the Madhumati & Krishnaganga where the Sharda temple is situated. However, this route was found to be very difficult and dangerous for the pilgrims.

Hence, the second route, which was the one that was usually taken by the pilgrims, would start from Gusha to Zirhom and then ascend to the Sitalvan pass. After the crossing the pass, the route would lead to Krishnaganga Valley and across to Dudnial on the right bank of the Krishnaganga river. The route would then follow along its right bank through the village Kherigam and, crossing the river opposite Sharda, one would reach the temple near the foot of a spur of a mountain on its east at the confluence of Madhumati and Krishnaganga. It would take about four days by foot from Gusa to reach the sacred shrine of Sharda. Gusa is about 105 kms from Srinagar and is very near to the Kupawara town.

Description & History

The ruins of the Sharda temple reveal that there were stone steps forming the stairs leading from the spot where the waters of the Madhumati fall into the Krishnaganga on the western approach to

the shrine. The stone steps were 10 feet wide and had 63 steps upto the entrance leading to a quadrangular court. This was observed by M.A. Stein during his visit to this temple in 1892 A.D. (Rajtarangni Vol. II 279). That it must have been a massive construction is evident from the fact that the width of its surrounding wall appears to have been about 6 ft. and the dimensions of the said quadrangular court were approximately 142 ft. x 94.5 ft.

The main temple is situated in the centre of the above mentioned quadrangular court which, at its base, measures 24 ft. x 24 ft. The basement of the main temple is 5 ft. 3 inches above the ground. The interior of the cellar is 12 ft. 3 inches square. It is stated that there used to be a stone slab measuring 7 ft. x 6½ ft. which was suppose to cover the *kunda* (spring cavity). Rishi Shandilya is suppossed to have had the *darshan* (vision) of Goddess Sharda in this *kunda* which used to be sanctum sanctorum of the shrine. The whole complex smacks of remote antiquity.

The Sarada tirtha (shrine) used to enjoy great fame during the ancient era. The antiquity is definitely prior to 700 A.D. because there is a reference in the Rajtarangini wherein it is mentioned that during King Lalithaditya's time, on the pretext of making a pilgrimage to this shrine, some mercenaries from Bengal had come to Kashmir to avenge the murder of their king.

Mr. M.A. Stein makes a reference to the poet Bhilana (Rajtarangini Vol. II 285) by describing Sharda, the goddess of learning, with great veneration. The goddess, represented by a swan (Rajhansa), carries as her diadem the glittering gold washed from the sands of Madhumati stream spreading like a brilliant crystal over her head. It is said that she makes even Mount Himalaya, the preceptor of Gauri, raise his head (his peaks) in pride of her having chosen his terrain as her abode.

Legend

The legend according to Mahatmya states that Muni Shandilya, son of Matanga Rishi, was practising great austerities for obtaining the sight of Goddess Sharada. Divine advice prompted him to proceed to the Syamala (supposed to be area west of Sopore). Mahadevi appeared to him at Gusa who promised him that he would obtain her darshan (vision) in the true form of Shakti in the forest of Sharda. Shandilya, as such, proceeded to Krishnaganga and then to the mountain range in the north where he saw a dance of the goddesses in the Rangavati forest. Shandilya then proceeded to Tejavana, the abode of Gautama on the banks of the Krishnaganga, whereupon he ascended to the top of the hill known as *Ganesha* and then to the forest of Sharda. It was here that the goddess Sharda revealed herself in her true form as union of Sharda, Narda & Vageshvari.

The pilgrimage to the Sharda shrine used to take place on the 8^{th} day (*Ashtami*) of the bright half of the lunar month of *Bhado* (August-September) as long as the sun on that day was not in the sign of Leo. However, if the 8^{th} day (*Ashtami*) of the bright-half of the lunar month of *Bhado* (August-September) fell on a day when the sun was in the sign of Leo, the pilgrimage to Harmuktaganga (i.e the day of *Ganga-Ashtami*) was recommended instead.

Sarada Peetha - The abode of learning

The importance of the shrine of Sharda in Kashmir can be judged from the legends which are attached to this goddess from very ancient times. These legends amply show that this abode of the goddess Sharda has been verily ascribed as being the centre of learning the pride of Kashmir and its people.

This goddess Sharada has also been named as *Saraswati-Sharda.* Kashmir has claimed to be the land of Goddess Saraswati and hence Kashmir it is also referred to as *Sharada-Peetha* or *Sarada Mandala.* It may be of interest to know that even the script used in Kashmir was known as *Sharda* since very early times. All important literature and scriptures, including the Puranas etc., were written in Sharada script till recent times.

The Sharada shrine has been very famous, not only in Kashmir, but also in the rest of India. There is a story that Hemachandra, a scholar from of Gujarat, received orders of his King, Jaisimha (1088 to 1172 A.D.) to go to Kashmir for finding the required literary material to complete his grammatical composition because it was believed that the necessary literary material for the purpose was only available in the library of the Sharda shrine. This shows that goddess Saraswati Sharda was truly held as the ruling deity in the realm of learning in Kashmir and outside.

As already discussed before, the very appellation of *Saraswat* to the Brahmins in Kashmir appears to have been derived from the goddess Saraswati-Sharda and not from the river Saraswati supposed to have been flowing in Kurukshetra area during the Rigvedic period.

Poet Bilhana's reference to goddess Sharda and to her symbolic representation as a Swan with the golden daidem is very suggestive. This, as has already been mentioned, has a similarity with the legend regarding Gangodbheda or Hamsavagesvari-Bheda in which Saraswati is represented by a swan *(Rajhansa)* which is meant to attribute the character and power of discriminative knowledge since a Rajhansa is supposed to have the unique ability to isolate the cream content from the milk.

5. Trisandhya or Sundbraer

Location

Tirtha of Tirsandhya or Sundbraer is situated in the Valley opening on the south of village of Wan-divalgam in the Bhirangi Paragna. It is located about 3 kms off the main road from Kukurnag to Daksum. Wan-Divalgum is about 5 kms from Kukurnag.

Description

This shrine is a spring with a well-like shape located on a spur of an arid hill. The well gets filled up three times during day time and three times during the night time. The spring of Saptarishi is just above this shrine. The intermediate flow of water is observed during the months of Ashada (April to June) and Jeshta (May-June). The name of this shrine (with its spring numbering three) is after the name of goddess *Sandhyadevi* representing the three fold recitation of *Gayatri Mantra.* This shrine is considered to be one of the wonders of the Valley.

Legend

The gushing out of the waters of Trisandhya spring on and during the months of Jeshta (May-June) and Ashada (June-July), and that too only three times during day and three times during night, is viewed as a unique phenomena. The availability of water on an arid spur of a hill is also considered remarkable.

Nilmata Purana has this to say about Trisamdhya Tirtha:

Sandhya Devi nadi punya yasyam snatasya manada
vyapaiti kalmasam dehat svargalokam ca gacchati

"There is the goddess Sandhya, the holy river, by bathing in the waters of the spring one's sins are removed from the body and one goes to heaven; O, giver of honour."

6. Jyestharudra or Shankaracharya

Location

In the environs of Srinagar, Shankaracharya hill is the most conspicuous. An ancient temple sits on its top and it can be seen with naked eye from long distance. The modern name of the temple is Shankaracharya. Its earlier name was *Jyestarudra.*

Description & History

The hill on which this temple is located was originally called *Gopagiri.* Some scholars are of the opinion that the temple atop the hill (Jyestarudra) was originally built with about 300 gold and silver images installed therein. King Sandimat (34 B.C.-13 A.D.) improved and added to the original temple. King Lalitaditya (697 – 734 A.D.) also appears to have repaired it. King Gopaditya too repaired it and bestowed it to the Brahmins for whom he built Agrahars thereon. Thereafter, King Zain-ul-Abdin (1421 – 1472 A.D.) repaired its roof which had tumbled down due to an earthquake. Shaikh Gulam Mohi-ud-Din, a sikh governer (1842 – 1845 A.D.) also repaired its dome. The present name of the temple is retained after the great philosopher, Adi Shankaracharya, who visited the Valley about ten centuries ago and was lodged on top of this hill. He is infact stated to have performed austerities in this temple. Abhinavgupta, as per local tradition, is known to have had a great discussion with him following which he is stated to have initiated the great Shankaracharya into the Shakti doctrine. The Islamic preacher, Shah Hamadal, on arriving

in Kashmir, named the Valley as *Baghe-i-Sulaiman* and this hill as *Takhte-i-Sulaiman.*

A great festival is held on the 15th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of *Shravan* (July-August), *i.e Shravan Purnamashi,* also known elsewhere as *Rakshabandhan.* On that day the devotees would ascend the hill in the early hours of the morning and reach the temple at about sunrise on the *Poornamashi* (full moon) day. Inside the temple there is a large black stone lingam which is worshipped with great devotion.



Old Sketch of Shankaracharya Temple (Drawn in 18th century)

7. Jyestesvara or modern Jyether

Location

The ancient shrine of Jyether (previously called *Jyesthesvara* or *Jyesthesa* or *Jyestha-Naga*) is situated on the hill slope overlooking the Dal-Lake at Srinagar and above the village of Jyether. It is about two kms from the north-east leg of the area earlier known as *Gopagiri* or *Gopa-giri-bal,* which later came to be known as *Gagribal.*

Description

Jyether originally had a huge linga near the Jyestha-Naga and was called by the name of *Shiva-Jyesthesa*. Jyestha-Naga forms the object of a seperate pilgrimage as described in the concerned Mahatmya.

Legend

M.A. Stein in Rajtarangini (Vol. II 289), while mentioning about this traditional importance of this shrine, states that the sanctity of the site is accounted by a legend relating to how Shiva liberated Parvati from Daityas and, after marrying her, he gave her the name of *Jyesthesa*. The name of the neighbouring village, *Jyether* is referred in the Mahatmya as *Jyestharaka*.

It is mentioned in the Mahatmya that Shiva is surveying from the top of the Sharika Parvata or Hari Parvat the length and breadth of the country around. He looks across towards the east on the Dal Lake and in the south towards the Jyestharudra Hill or the Gopagiri or what is now known as *Shankaracharya Hill.*

According to the tradition, there used to be a congregation of devotees on the 5th day of the dark half of the lunar month of Vaisakh (April-May) i.e *Sripanchmi* at the site of Jyestha-Naga.

This shrine still retains its importance and *Kashmiri* Brahmins visit it on every Thursday during the lunar month of *Jeshtha* (May-June) and on three Thursdays in the lunar month of *Ashada* (June-July).

8. Tulamulya or Tulmul or modern Khirbhavani

Tulmul or Khirbhavani shrine is the most sacred of the Devasthana among the Kashmiri Pandits and it is, as such, held in highest esteem

by them. This shrine is considered by Kashmiri Pandits to be as sacred as Kashi is to the Hindus in general.

Location

The shrine of Tulmul or Tulamulya (according to Kalahana's Rajatarangni) is situated 24 kms from Srinagar in the northern direction (Longitude 34 degree 13', Lattitude 74 degree 40').

Description & History

The shrine consists of a large seven sided spring in the centre of which is a small marble stone temple. There are two idols made of black stone, which are said to have been recovered from the bottom of the spring itself. The perimeter of the spring is fenced and the flooring of the compound is made of rough stone slabs. The length of the compound is about 250 ft. and its width is 200 ft. The surroundings are covered with ancient chinar trees, making the spot most enchanting. Originally this spot was encompassed on all sides by various water channels (called as *Naalas*) which were connected with the main Sindh river. Now, only one stream flows near the entrance of the compound. In Rajtarangini Kalhana mentions the name of this stream as *Chandrabhaga* (name that was given to this tributary of Sindh river, flowing down the Sindh valley towards its confluence with Vitasta at Shadipora) which passes through Dudarhoma which is about 5 kms from Tulmul. Nilmat Purana also mentions about this stream and calls it *Chandrabhaga.* The village of Tulmul is very near to this shrine. The Purohitas of the shrine live in this village since ancient times.

Legend

This shrine is dedicated to goddess Ragnya Devi. It is beleived that this goddess was brought from Lanka (Ceylon or Sri Lanka) by

Hanuman, where she was known as goddess *Shyama*. Ravana was a devotee of this goddess, but after finding that he had become haughty, cruel and morally degraded, she left Lanka and instead decided to bestow her grace upon the people of Sharda Peetha. It was her divine wish to change her aspect to goddess *Ragnya*, in the form of a staunch Vaishnav (vegetarian) deity. Her divine attendant Hanuman brought her first to Manzgom which is a spot that is located on the northern spur of Pir Panjal range between Banihal pass and Sidan or between Aharbal water-fall and Kulgam town. The shrine of Ragnya Devi at Manzgom is situated on a terrace like spur where there is a small spring dedicated to the goddess. It is believed that goddess decided to shift to the north and selected the spot at Tulmul where she continued to bestow her blessings to the devout.

It is said that there were many occasions when the sacred spring got inundated due to the flooding of the river Sindh and would get out-of-sight during such times. Gradually the shrine got fully submerged in water. Ultimately, the shrine got into oblivion and almost faded from the memory of the Kashmiri Pandits, especially during the Muslim rule in Kashmir. However one Kashmiri Pandit, Krishna Pandit Taplu, rediscovered the shrine in 17^{th} century A.D. after he, in the course of a dream, was called upon to locate the sacred spring in the water. It is said that, just as mentioned in the dream, he was guided by a water-snake to the spot where a Mulberry tree was jutting out of the water. Thus, the pilgrims came to visit the water-logged spot in boats and started worshipping the mulberry tree (which in *Kashmiri* is called *Tul)* and once the water subsided, its root (called *Mul* in *Kashmiri*) became a prominent feature of the shrine (consequent to which it came to be referred to as *Tul-Mul* meaning the 'mulberry-root'). This nomenclature must have been in vogue long before King Jayapida's reign (i.e 751 A.D.). During his reign, according to Rajtarangini, when the jagirs (lands given by the royalty

to any individual) of Brahmins of Tulamullya had been confiscated by King Jayapida, a prominent Brahmin of the place called *Ittla* requested the king to recall such orders. It said that when the king refused to do so and in fact declared that he was not afraid of him, Ittla got infuriated and cursed the king. It so happened that after he had done so, one of the golden poles of the king's canopy came down on him as a result of which he suffered an injury which proved to be fatal. This anecdote mentioned by Kalhana amply proves that the shrine must have been well known during Jayapida's rule while also showing that the Brahmins of Tulmullya were indeed wielding very strong spiritual powers.

The most remarkable natural phenomenon attached with this shrine is that the colour of the waters of the spring change, sometimes within the same day or, at times, after a long interval. There is no predictability as to what colour the water will acquire when. Usually colours observed are milky white, sea-green, parrot green, light pink etc. It is said that if the colour changes to black or red, it portends the occurrence of some unfortunate event. Pink or sea-green colour augers well and the people will be blessed with good fortune.

It may, however, be mentioned here that, strangely enough, the spring water, if taken out in a bucket, does not show any colour at all. The random change of colour of the spring continues to be a mystery.

The abode of goddess Rajarajesvari Ragnya is not only sacred for attaining spiritual bliss but is also a place where hopes and aspirations of Kashmiri Pandits as a distinct community are revitalized. It is in this holy environment that the Pandits would invariably feel encouraged to revive themselves spiritually.

It is an age-old convention that pilgrims, on a day when they have consumed non-vegetarian food, are not expected to enter the sanctum. No non-vegetarian food can either be eaten or cooked inside the

premises of this shrine. Normally, every pilgrim has to have a bath and then change clothes before he/she enters its compound.

There are a number of shops belonging to Brahmins of Tulmul, situated just outside the inner compound. These shops are meant for supply of *samgri* (items for worship and ceremony) and eatables for pilgrims.

Pilgrims offer *Kand* (sugar sticks) dry fruit, kheer (rice cooked in milk), milk and flowers etc. The *ratnadeep* (i.e lighted earthern lamps containing ghee) is an inalienable part of samgri, so much so, that even if one does not perform Pooja (worship and ceremony), the offering of ratnadeeps anywhere around the holy spring is considered indispensable.

Puja is normally performed from the western side of the shrine i.e. the front side where Brahmin Pujaris (Priests) offer their services. After the Puja is over, the Prasad (food offerings for worship distributed amongst the pilgrims and devotees present near the sanctum) is given and the whole ritual is culminated by *pradakshina* (circumambulating around the holy shrine).

There are many devotees who perform Yagnya or Havan on a large scale, especially during summer, in the area adjoining the main shrine.

The holiness of this shrine is so bewitching and profound that even the Muslim populace in Tulmul village greatly respect the deity and there have been instances in the past when even the muslim boatmen, who would carry the pilgrims to the shrine in small house-boats called *Dongas*, would not partake of non-vegetarian food, including eggs, on the day before their arrival at the shrine as a mark of respect for the goddess.

Amongst the multitude of shrines in the Valley, Kheerbhavani, Chakreshara (Hariparbat) and the Juwala Bhagvati at Khrew are the

three most important ruling dieties of Kashmiri Pandits. Every family amongst them owe their allegiance to one of the said three Ruling Deities i.e *Ragnya*, *Chakreshvar Sharika Devi* and *Juwala Devi*. However, the Pandits, in the recent times have been mostly drawn towards Ragnya Devi at Tulmul.

The attraction of Ragnya Devi is so strong amongst the Pandit community that whosoever amongst them happens to visit the Valley from any place craves to pay his/her obeisance to this goddess. Such a practice has become an inalienable part of their lives.

One may dare say that the continued physical disconnect of Kashmiri Pandit devotees from this great shrine, whatever be the cause, could have a debilitating effect on the Kashmiri Pandit ethos. Without Tulmul and Chakreshvara, a Kashmiri Pandit's identity would be imperilled.

On any day of the year, especially on every 8th day (Ashtami) of bright lunar half of any month, the devotees are found reciting holy psalms in praise of this goddess, which include *Raganya Kavach, Rudryamala Tantra, Panchastavi, Bhavani Sahastranama, Indrakshi* etc. The whole sanctum area resounds with the recitation of these holy psalms and the shrine sparkles with the lights emanating from hundreds of Ratandeeps. A special festival is celeberated on the 8th day of bright lunar half of Jeshta (May-June) and Ashad (June-July) every year at this shrine.



Tulmul or Khir Bhavani, Spring/ Temple

9. Vitastatra (Vethavatur)

Location

This place is located at a distance of about 1.5 kms west of Verinag.

Description & History

There are two beautiful springs having crystal clear water which are supposed to be the real source of the Jhelum river (Vitasta). King Ashoka of Kashmir is said to have built number of Viharas at this location.

A festival is held at this shrine every year on the thirteenth day of the bright lunar half of Bhadu (August-September).

10. Vijayshvra (Vejibror or Bijbehara)

Location

The location of this shrine is about 300 ft. away from the left-bank of the Jhelum river (Vistasta). These two temples were completely destroyed by Sikander (the iconaclast) in the fourteenth century A.D.

This locality used to be the top-most center of Kashmir Shaivism, Sanskrit learning and other allied subjects. There was a university located on the left bank of Vitasta river lying between the present town and Chakdar plateau (Originally called as *Chakradhara* dedicated to Lord Vishnu).

Description & History

Ashoka had erected two temples and a stone enclosure, which were called *Ashokesvara*. The ancient name of this place is *Vijayesvara*, based on the ancient temple of *Siva Vijayesvara* built by King Vijaya. This is one of the oldest and most famous shrines in Kashmir. The temple was completely destroyed by Sikander (The Iconoclast) in the 14^{th} century.

This is an important pilgrim spot for *Amarnath Yatra* where puja (worship and ceremony) of Lord Shiva is performed by the yatris before proceeding to Amarnath.

11. Chirmochna (Krankanadi)

Location

This is an ancient shrine lying at the confluence of Krankanadi and Sindhu rivers situated in the Sindh valley near Prang.

Description & History

According to Nilmat Purana this shrine is very ancient and holy and is an inalienable part of the whole Gangabal Yatra

Kalhana in Rajtarangini states that, King Jalauka performed ascetic exercises and meditation for a long time and ultimately left his mortal remains at that sacred spot.

On the 5th day of bright lunar half of Bhadu (August-September), during Gangabal Yatra, pilgrims would perform *Shradha* (ceremonies and prayers, including the making of food offering, to one's ancestors) at this shrine.

12. Isveshvara (Ishbar)

Location

This shrine is located at the base of Zabervan skirting the north-eastern part of the Dal Lake.

Description & History

The name Ishbar is derived from *Isveshvara*, being the name of *Ishana*, the Guru (teacher) of King Samdhimat (Arya Raja). There is a sacred spring known as Guptaganga located within the premises of this shrine. In ancient days this site used to be a part of the sacred Suryeshvara shrine. There used to be a temple of Ardha Naresvara at this site in ancient times.

The annual festival (which used to be celebrated here on 1st day of Vaisakh of the Vikram Era) is known as *Baisakhi* when *Kashmiri* Brahmins visit the shrine of Guptaganga and bathe in the sacred spring followed by worship of Shiva-Shakti. On this day the sun enters the Zodiac sign of Aries (*Mesha*)

13. Martand (Mattan-Bhavan)

Location

This sacred site is situated on the way to Pahalgam, 60 kms from Srinagar. The adjoining village is called Mattan.

Description & History

On this site the temple of Martand (Sun god), the presiding diety of this shrine (also known as *Bhavan*) was built by King Lalitaditya. The temple is situated on a plateau which is about 1.6 kms south-east of Bhavan. This temple was considered as an architectural marvel which was destroyed by Sultan Sikandar in 14th century A.D. This temple is in ruins now.

There are two magnificent springs, traditionally representing *Vimla* and *Kamla* (connected with the birth of Sun-god, Martand), situated at Bhavan.

The main pilgrimage to this shrine falls on all 7th days of the bright half of any lunar month provided it is a sunday including any such sunday which falls in an intercalary (*Adikmas;* an additional lunar month which gets inserted into the lunar calender after every two and and half years) and every such day is called *Vijay Saptami.* Pilgrims perform Shradha on the bank of the stream issuing from the spring at Bhavan on any Vijay Saptimi falling in an *Adhikmas* (also referred to by Kashmiri Pandits as *Malmas-Banumas*).



Martand (Late 19th Century)

14. Khrew (Jvalamukhi-Durga)

Location

This important shrine is situated about 25 kms south-east of Srinagar on a rocky hill above Wyuen village in Vihi pargana. Its sanctum sanctorum consists of a rock on which Svayambhu-Srichakra (self-formed geometrical representation of Shiv-Shakti phenomena or that of the transcendental and immanent aspect of the universe), which, apart from the Chakreshwara of Sharika on Hariparbat, is also associated with Jvalamukhi Durga at Khrew.

Description & History

This shrine is an ancient one and continues to be one of the main Yeshta-Devis of Kashmiri Brahmans. In the adjoining Khrew village there is an abundance of fine springs which are objects of worship.

The annual festival is held on the 14th day of bright lunar half of Ashad (June-July). The worship of the Srichakra as per Tantra-Shastra is on the same lines as that of Chakreshvara of Hari Parbat.

15. Sharika Bhagvati (Pradyumana or Chakreshvara)

Location

One of the most prominent promontories in the city of Srinagar is Hariparbat situated in the north of old Srinagar city. This hill is considered to be very holy, both by Hindus and Muslims. The entire Hariparbat hill, right upto its surrounding boundaries along its *Parikrama* (circumambulating path) from south to north, north-east and east, is treated by the devotees as highly sacred. Most of the shrines around the *Parikrama* (periphery), especially those touching the western slopes of the hill, are of the remotest antiquity.

The important places of worship of this shrine start from its southern foot, which is called *Ganesha* (in the olden times it was also known as *Bhimasvamin*), wherefrom the actual Parikrama would start towards the northern direction. Further on are the shrines of Saptareshis and Mahakali on the south-western foot till one reaches Deviangan on the west and thereafter to Mahalakshmi along the northern spur of the hill.

The sanctum sanctorum of goddess Sharika is located on the western slope of this hill and it is known as Chakreshvara, which is directly overlooking Deviangan. There is also a temple inside the old fort at the top of the hill which is dedicated to goddess Durga.

Description & Legend

Goddess Sharika at Chakreshvara is iconically represented by a huge rock standing vertically and facing the west. Somewhere in the middle of the rock is a naturaly embossed *Sriyantara* or *Srichakra* [A diagrammatic representation of the whole cosmos, the ultimate reality manifesting itself in myriad shapes and forms in time and space, shown as a set of three upward and three downward triangles intersecting each other and comprising thirty-six geometrical forms or thirty-six elements derived from six added three times becoming eighteen, representing eighteen manifested attributes or eighteen arms of Shakti while an equal number of her opposite polarities are represented by Shiva (Parma-Shiva or *para* i.e the reality beyond all comprehension) which together, in totality (comprising thirty-six elements), connotes the male-female, Shiva-Shakti, purusha-prakrati, para-apara or convergence-divergence principle.] The Srichakra on the Chakreshvara rock can only be seen if the thick layer of vermilion, (which, as a measure of protection, always covers the whole holy rock) is removed. It is said that this natural Sriyantara is the only one, throughout the world, which is existing on the vertical plain. It is especially worshipped by the Tantric practitioners. On careful examination of this rock, it is seen that it is of light green colour (sapphire stone) and no other rock of this type can be found anywhere else on this hill. Some experts have opined that a meteorite might have fallen at the time of the dessication of the Satisar lake, or even earlier, due to the impact of which the waters of the great lake might have drained off.

This interpretation appears to be most pertinent if one were to consider the myth of the water-borne demon named *Jalodbhava* who has been stated to have created havoc around the Satisar lake due to which goddess Sharika in the form of a myna destroyed the demon by picking a pebble in her beak and dropping it on his head. This

apparently crushed him at the same spot at which the Hariparbat now stands. On close examination of this mythological event it is possible that this story is, in fact, referring to the extra-terrestrial phenomenon such as that of a meteorite which may have fallen into the Satisar lake in the remote antiquity at the place where Hariparbat stands today. This hill, in course of time, became an iconic representation of goddess Sharika (Sharika means an eagle) who's image is that of an *Ashta-Dashabuzi* (eighteen armed) and is one of the most prominent presiding deities *(Yashta Devi)* of *Kashmiri* Brahmins.

The name *Hariparbat* is derived from the word *Haer* (which in *Kashmiri* means a myna) and *parbat* (which in Sanskrit means a hill), together meaning "The hill of the mynah" or "The hill of Sharika". Some scholars say that the word *Haer* also means an eagle because in Sanskrit it is called *Sarika*. This nomenclature appears to be correct because the devotees, especially the followers of Tantra, would feed meat pieces to the eagles on the ninth day of the bright lunar half of the month of Chaitra (March-April: Chaitra Shukla Navmi) and the ninth day of the bright lunar half of the month of Ashad (June-July: Ashad Shukla Navmi). This is indicative of the symbolic relationship between the eagle and the goddess Sharika.

There is also an age-old saying that there are *Trikoti Devis* and *Devatas* (three crores of gods and goddesses) residing on this sacred Hill. There is a reference in Nilmat Purana which suggests that this hill had attained a divine status immediately after the destruction of the demon Jalodbhava. The relevant verse says:

Shambhor Devyas ca rajendra yathavrttam arimdama
tadrsam sa vidhanam tu karayitva Janardanah.
Jalodbhavasirasy asmims krtavan aspadam Harih
imam manujasardula yasyam samnihitav ubhau.

Kesavas ca Sivas caiva sarvakalmasanasanau
Krtadevapratisthanam devadevam Janardanam
rsayo devata naga Gandharvapsarasam ganah
drastum sarve samajagmur Jalodbhavasirasy atha.
(N.P.201 to 204)

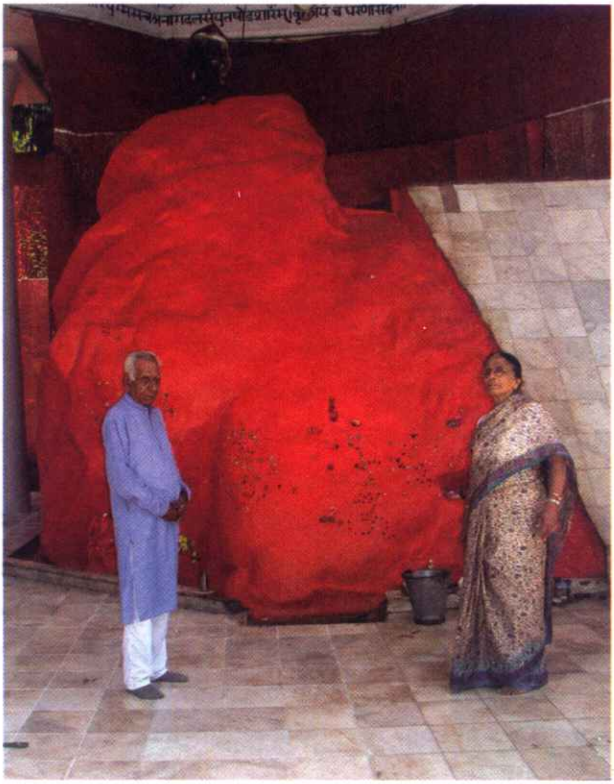
"O lord of kings and controller of enemies,
Janardana Hari, having got erected such establishment
of Shambhu and the goddess (Parvati) in that pose,
made his abode on the head of Jalodbhava.
O lion among men,
the sages, the gods, the Nagas,
Gandharvas, the hosts of the heavenly maidens,
all came there at the head of Jalodbhava to see this
(statue) in which both Kesava and Siva, the
destroyer of all sins, are represented and to
see Janardana, the God of gods, who erected the
divine image."

(N.P. translated by Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai)

This hill is also known as *Pradyumana* by the followers of Bhagvatas or Pancharatras amongst the local Brahmins.

Padma Shree, Gulam Rasool Santosh, the well known painter and writer, acclaimed as as an artist of distinction in Tantric-art, had keenly, for years together, surveyed the entire Hariparbat hill. He opined that the boulder striven face on the west, north-west and south-west of the hill contained a number of huge rocks which appear to have been shaped by human hands into particular statuesque forms (providing human, animal and other images) which appear to communicate intelligibly (he called them sound bearing images). His hypothesis was based on his observation of images projected by these rocks under different variations of light. He observed amazing forms on the face of these

rocks, arising in the course of change of light conditions; such as those occurring due to variations in the direction and angle subtended by the of sun at sunrise, noon, sunset or by the moon, during its dark-half or bright-half phase, depending on the time of the year. The author had the occasion of being invited by Mr. Santosh for a slide-show at the Oberoi Hotel at Mumbai on this interesting subject. On viewing the pictures one was able to see amazing images and figures which, as per the hypothesis of Mr. Santosh, were conveying some information in a language which, according to him, was closest to Kashmiri. He further opined that the makers of these statuesque forms appeared to have links with pictorial writings/script of Mohenjodaro & Harappan. The number of such projections being very high, may have a connotation which corresponds to the mythology of *Trikoti Devi Devata (three crore gods and goddesses)* residing on this hill as mentioned above. However, this hypothesis is indeed thought-provoking and would require in-depth research and investigation. The most important days for prayers in this shrine are made on *Navreh* and *Hara Navmi* (See Appendix - 3)



Chakreshwara at Hariparbat (refer to pg 272)

16. Amarnath (Amreshvara)

Location

Amarnath is one of the most popular shrines of Kashmir, which is known throughout the world and the pilgrimage of which attracts thousands of pilgrims from all over. This shrine is located in a natural cave at an altitude of about 12,000 ft. ASL and 16 kms south-east of Zojila pass. There are two routes leading to this shrine; one is a normal pilgrimage route starting from Pahalgam via Chandanwari, Sheshnag (Vavjan), Mahagunas Pass (14,000 ft. ASL) and Panjtarni,

altogether at a distance of 48 kms from Pahalgam and, the other, a less frequently used route, is via Baltal, near Sonamarg, meeting the first route at the glacier between Panjtarni and the Holy Cave. This route, though very arduous for normal pilgrims, is a shorter one and takes less time as compared to the time taken by the pilgrims via Pahalgam.

Description & History

The shrine of Amarnath or Amreshvara is enshrined inside a huge fissure-like cave in which is a lingam made of ice and formed by the droplets of water oozing from the ceiling of this cave during the month of Shravan (July-August). It is believed that the size of this *syambhu* (self-forming) lingam made of ice changes according to waxing and waning of the moon and it attains maximum size on the 15th bright-half (full-moon) of the month of July-August (*Shravan Pournima*) on which day the Amarnath Yatra (as a pilgrimage and procession) is indicated for the devout. This lingam is considered as an embodiment of Shiva Amareshvara.

It is said that this shrine, though considered to be very ancient, had long ago gone into oblivion due to reasons which are not known and, in fact, people had actually forgotten about its exact location. It is said that once a shepherd, a resident of Pahalgam, while around the cave area, re-discovered this cave and the ice-lingam whereupon the shrine came into limelight once again. People, thereafter, started visiting the shrine regularly on Shravan Pourinima day. Since then there is a tradition that the family of this shepherd and his descendents keeps on getting 50% of the share of the total offerings and donations collected during the annual pilgrimage.

An interesting aspect of the shrine, which mainly drives the faith amongst the devotees, pertains to the day of the pilgrimage when

a pair of doves appear at the entrance to the Holy Cave right from early morning and remain there till evening. These birds are not seen again till the day of next Yatra. It may be pointed out here that not a single bird is seen beyond Sheshnag, right upto the Holy Cave. How and wherefrom the pair of doves appears on *Shravan Pournima* is rather mysterious.

The Amarnath Yatra (procession), known as *Chhadi-Mubarak,* mostly comprise mendicants (sadhus), sanyasis (people who have renounced worldly life), mathdharis (In-charges of temples/shrines) etc. This congregation of devotees proceed towards the Amarnath Cave from Srinagar city led by a staff-bearer (*Chhadi*). The *Yatra* (pilgrimage) starts on foot from the Akhara (a site where the Yata assembles) at Badshah Chowk on 4th day of the bright half (Shukla) of the lunar month of Shravan (July-August) every year. The details of the itinerary of the Yatra are summarized below:

1. First halt: Pampore (13 kms from Srinagar): 4th day of *Shukla* in the lunar month of Shravan
2. Second halt: Avantipur (25 kms): 5th day as above
3. Third halt: Vejibror (40 kms): 6th day as above
4. Fourth halt: Anantnag (55 kms): 7th day as above
5. Fifth halt: Mattan (63 kms): 8th & 9th day as above.
6. Sixth halt: Aishmukam (85 kms): 10th day as above.
7. Seventh halt: Pahalgam (100 kms): 11th and 12th day as above.
8. Eighth halt: Chandanwari (15 kms from Pahalgam): 12th day as above.

6. Nineth halt: Sheshnag (30 kms from Pahalgam): 13th day as above

7. Tenth halt: Panchtarani (42 kms from Pahalgam):14th day as above

8. Elevanth halt: Holy Cave (48 kms from Pahalgam: 15th day (Purnamashi)

All other *Yatris* (Pilgrims) who do not form the part of the *Chhadi* arrive subsequently starting directly from Pahalgam on the 12th day after the *Chhadi* leaves for Chandanwari. Most of the Yatris proceed on foot, but there are many, young and old, who use ponies for the travel from Pahalgam to the Holy Cave.

Other ancient shrines and holy places of the Valley

I. Kapalamochana

Kapalamocana or Degom is an important shrine situated at about 2.5 kms west of Shopian. In order to reach this place one has to cross Rambyar stream. This shrine has two fine springs with an ancient Shiv-linga, which is still an object of worship. The main festival falls on 12th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of *Shravan* (July-August), being a day on which *Shradas* (ceremonies in which prayers and food offerings are made for/to the ancestors of one's family) are performed.

II. Pushkar

This shrine, which is still the object of worship for the Kashmiri Brahmins, is situated about 10 kms west of Biru (District Badgam) and about 4 kms north of Khag on a spur adjoining spring of Pushkarnaga which is supposed to be the abode of Brahma (The Lord of all

creation). This shrine is supposed to have the same sanctity as that of Pushkar near Ajmer in Rajasthan.

III. Suyam

Suyam is a short form of *Svayambhu* (self-formed). This is a shrine which is situated within 1 km from Nichihom in Machipur pargana of District Baramulla. It is an ancient shrine, the importance of which appears to have dwindled about a decade ago. Here pilgrims would perform *Shradhas* (rites and ceremonies for the benefit of one's ancestors) and offer rice as *Pindas* (food offering to the departed) cooked by using the heat of the vapors emanating from the fissures in the ground of the shrine. This area is volcanic, but appears to have cooled down now.

IV. Vicharnag

The shrine of Vicharnag is situated in the outskirts of Srinagar in the north on the Srinagar-Leh Highway. A fine spring, in addition to the ruins of an ancient temple built by King Vikramaditya (521-563 A.D.) is located within its premises. This temple was destroyed by Sultan Sikander. On every 15th day of the dark-half of the lunar month of *Chaitra* (March-April) i.e *Chaitra Amavasya*, there is a pilgrimage at this shrine and devotees bathe in the spring and perform *Puja* (prayer).

V. Bhadrakali

The small village of Badrkali, which is about 16 kms to the east of Suyam via Krambhar, Tehsil Handwara (70 kms north-west of Srinagar) has an ancient shrine of Bhadrakali. This shrine has a spring and the devotees perform puja at that spot. A festival is held on on the 11th day of the dark-half of the lunar month of

Jyestha (May-June) i.e the *Bhadrakali Jayanti*. Goddess, *Bhadrakali* is considered to be having the same sanctity as that of Sharika Bhagvati at Hariparbat.

VI. Harmukatganga

The holiest of holies for the Bhattas, *Harmukatganga, Uttarmanasa* or *Uttarganga* or *Gangabal* lake lies at the foot of the north-eastern glacier on the Haramukh range, which is about 40 kms north-east of Srinagar. The Harmukh peaks, which encompass the Gangabal lake, rise to the altitude of about 17,000 ft. ASL, are considered as Lord Shiva's diadem where, as per tradition, human feet cannot reach. The Gangabal lake itself is situated at an altitude of over 13,000 ft. ASL and is considered to be the source of the stream known which in Kashmir is also referred to as *Ganga.*

The pilgrimage to Gangabal (Gangbal Yatra) falls on the 8th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of Bhadrapada (August-September) during the years when there are no intercalary months *(Banumas-Malmas)* near the month of Bhadu. During the year when there is Malmas-Banumas, the pilgrimage in the olden days used to be diverted to Sharda Shrine in the 1st week of the bright lunar half of Bhadu and, as such, there would be no Gangabal pilgrimage in any such year.

The Gangabal Yatra, according to Ganga-Mahatmya, starts from Srinagar, then proceeds to Charnag, Ganderbal, Nunar, Kranknadi (near Prang) and thereafter halts at Ramaradhan (at the foot of Bharat mountain). After ascending the Bharat Mountain, the yatra crosses the passes of Mahalish and Hamsdhara reaching the sanctum sanctorum of Gangabal lake via the twin glacier lakes of Nundkol. The pilgrims then perform Shradha rituals and immersions of bones and ashes of their departed relatives in this lake with utmost religiosity and faith.

It is said that this pilgrimage has the same sanctity as that of Hardwar

in Uttar Pradesh. The return journey is routed by descending into the valley of Bhuteshvar (i.e *Bhutsher* in *Kashmiri*) at Narannag (Siva-Bhuteshvara) where the pilgrims take bath in the sacred Sodhara spring before returning to Srinagar.

VII. Mahadev

One of the most prominent snow clad mountain peaks in the east of Sinagar city, which is visible in most part of the Valley, is known as Mahadev. As the name itself implies, its mountain peak is considered to be the seat of Lord Mahadev. This shrine is situated at an altitude of about 13,000 ft. ASL. The holy mountain actually forms a part of the mountain chain towards the south upto Zabervan near Jeythyer. At the foot of the holy mountain flows a stream from Tarsar lake situated south-east of Mahadev. This stream then flows into the Harwan water reservoir.

The pilgrimage to this shrine falls on the same date as that of Amarnath yatra. The pilgrims start from Srinagar on the 14th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of Shravan (July-August) and halt at Dhara (above Harvan) for the night. They start the ascent towards the peak at about 3 a.m. during the night while reaching the summit at about 9 a.m. on the 15th day of the bright half of the lunar month of *Shravan* (July-August), i.e *Shravan Poornmashi*. After performing *Puja* (prayer) they return to Harvan on the same day.

VIII. Sureshvari

Originally the whole area of Ishber, near present day Nishat, on the eastern bank of the Dal lake, including the foot of the eastern mountain range, in the ancient times was called as *Sureshvari Kshetra* which was considered sacred to the goddess Durga. Now the goddess is worshipped on a high crag rising from the mountain range to the

east of Ishber village. The seat of the goddess is on a rugged rock, about 3000 ft. above this village. This shrine was in the earlier days considered to be of exceptional holiness.

According to Sureshvari Mahatmya the natural rock on the top of the crag mentioned above, represents the consort of goddess Durga. This goddess, as per legend, is connected with the killing of demon Ruru. There used to be a temple of Ardha Nareshvara (Shiv-Parvati) inside the premises of the present day Ishber shrine which was still in existence even during Kalhana's time i.e 1148 A.D. This temple was erected by Suravarma, minister of King Avantivarman, but is now no longer in existence. The sanctity of this ancient shrine can be judged by its repeated mention in Nilmat Purana wherein its holiness has been highly extolled, such as:

"Snatva tu Madatirthe cha Skandatirthe cha manavah
tatha Sureshvaritirthe svargalike mahiyate"

(N.P.1322)

The pilgrimage to this Shrine is indicated on Baisakhi and on Durga Ashtami (i.e the bright-half of the lunar month of Ashvin (Septtember-October).

IX. Uma (Brari-Angan)

This shrine is situated about 20 kms east of Achabal in the Arpath (ancient *Harsapatha*) valley which is about 10 kms from Kuther, which stands on the norther spur of the mountain with dense pine forest which are north-west of Nobuk-Nai and about 1 km from Utrasu at its foot.

The village adjacent to the shrine is called *Brari-angan* or *Uma Nagari*. This shrine comprises five springs sacred to Goddess Uma (Parvati). An annual festival is held here on 8th day of the bright lunar half of

the month of *Chaitra* (March-April) i.e *Chaitra Shukla Ashtmi* on which day *Yagyas* (fire ceremony) are performed by the devotees.

X. Lok-Bhavan (Lokapunya)

This shrine, comprising a fine spring, is called Lok-Bhavan. It is situated at the western end of Breng pargana which is about five miles south-west of Achabal and is near to Larikpura village.

King Lalitaditya is said to have built a town at this place called *Lok-Bhavan*. This was a Naga shrine sacred to Lord Veshnu. The annual pilgrimage at this shrine falls on 10th day of bright lunar half of *Ashad* (June-July) i.e *Ashad Shukla Dvadashi*.

XI. Gudhar (Godavari)

The shrine of Gudhar is dedicated to holy Godavari. This place is situated on the right bank of the Veshav (Vishoka) river near the twin villages of Gudar & Asthel which are located west of Divsar, in the Divsar pargana of Kulgam Tehsil.

The original ancient name of the twin villages Gudhar & Asthel was known as *Godhara Hastishala* which was founded by King Godhara in pre-Christian era.

According to tradition and Godhavari Mahatmya, the Holy Godhavari appears at Gudhar after every eleven years at which time the sacred waters Godhavari flow through the mouth of a cow (symbolized by a stone sculptured cow's mouth still existing on the northern spur of the Gudhar mountain). Pilgrims visiting the shrine would perform their puja on the 5th day of the bright-half of the lunar month *Shravan* (July-August) i.e *Shravan Shukla Panchimi*. This pilgrimage is called Gudhar Yatra. The Mahatmya says:

"Yasmin girau mahadevi Gautamena mahatmana
gaur va vidarita prokto girisattamah
grame Godaro vai parvatah sampratishthitah
sa gramah prathito 'dyapi Godarakhyo maheshvari
gaur vai vidarita yatrothita Gangajalokshita
sa vai Godavari nama Ganga paramapavani."

XII. Vardhamanesha (Malyar)

The famous ancient shrine of Vardhamanesha was originally situated at place which is now known as Malyar (at 2^{nd} Bridge, Srinagar) where now stands a temple of later origin dedicated to Lord Shiva.

According to local tradition, the shrine of Siva Vardhamanesha is supposed to have stood on the right bank of Vitasta near Ganpatyar. M. A. Stein (in his translation of Kalhana's Rajtarangni), while quoting "Vitasta-Mahatmya" and the local tradition, states that this shrine was close to Ganeshghat and the local priests erected a temple at the old site in 1888 A.D.

It is said that the Original Shiv linga, representing Shiva Vardhamanesha was retrieved from an adjacent mosque, and installed inside the new temple where it is still worshipped as Vardhamanesh.

XIII. Ardha-Nareshvara (Naru)

This ancient shrine is located about 3 kms south-west of Kukarnag near the village of Naru in the low hills flanking the Valley. There is a small spring where Shiva is worshipped as Ardha Nareshvara from ancient times. Close to this is a small temple which enshrines the image of Lord Vishnu.

The pilgrimage to this shrine is called *Dumatbal Yatra* which falls on

11th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of *Vaishak* (May-June) i.e *Vaishak Shukla Ekadashi.*

XIV. Harishvar

Harishvara shrine is located on the summit of the high ridge which rises to the north of Khunmoh (of which ancient name was *Khonamusa*) village which is about 15 kms east of Srinagar. The shrine consists of a Svayambhu (Self-formed) linga which inside a natural cave and is the place of annual pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage to this shrine falls on on the 15th day of the dark-half of the lunar month of *Jeshta* (May-June), *i.e Krishna Amavasi.* Pilgrims first visit Takshak Naga near Zevan and Bhuvaneshvari Naga situated on the hill side above Khunmoh, where they have bath and perform puja.

XV. Panch-Hasta (modern Panzat)

This shrine is situated in Devsar pargana and north of Verinag not very far from Qazigund. The shrine is identified by a large spring which is held to be sacred because the River Vitasta is supposed to have re-emerged from this spring after the same had disappeared at this spot while flowing down from Verinag and Vethavutur. The annual pilgrimage falls on the 5th day of the dark half of the lunar month of *Shravan* (June-July) i.e. *Nag Panchmi*, or *Shravan Krishna Panchimi.*

XVI. Anantnag

Anantnag, which is about 55 kms from Srinagar, is a well known town in South Kashmir. There is a big spring in the middle of the town which is sacred to the Brahmins of Kashmir. This spring (Nag) is situated at the foot of the Martand plateau at its western extremity. This town is also called by the name of Islamabad.

Nilmat purana also mentions about this spring

"Kambalashvatarau nagau Karkotaka Dhanamjayau
Ailapattro hy Anantas ca nagau Nandopanandakau".
(N.P.881)

The annual pilgrimage to this shrine takes place on the 14th day of the bright-half of the lunar month of Bhado (August-Sept.) Anant-Chudah (Anant Chaturdashi or Bhado Shukla Chaturdashi) (August-Sept.) at Nagabal which is located in the town of Anantnag.

XVII. Gotamnag

This shrine is situated in the east of Anantnag at a short distance where there is a spring sacred to Gotam Reshi. There is a reference to this shrine in the Nilmat purana:

"Mahaksash ca Vatusash ca Katuso Deva-Danavau
Naksatro Masakah Pito Gautamah Sushubo Jiha".
(N.P.904)

The annual pilgrimage falls on Bhado Shukla Ekadashi (August/ September).

XVIII. Hastikarana

Hastikaran Naga falls within the village of Vaghom, which is situated about 1.5 kms north of the place where the River Vitasta makes a great bend just near the udar of Chakdar, Vegibror. The spring of Hastikaran is considered very sacred by the Brahmins of the locality.

XIX. Chakdar (Chakradhara)

The great temple of Veshnu Chakradhara was one of the most prominent shrines in Kashmir up till 1120 A.D. before it was destroyed by fire.

Although the temple is not existing now, nevertheless the Chakdhar Hill continues to be treated as highly sacred. The sanctity of this shrine is clearly indicated in the Nilmat purana:

"Nityam samnihitu devo rajams Chakradaro Harih
tam drstva pundarikaksam dashadhenuphalam labhet".
(N.P.1149)

Shrines associated with some mysterious natural phenomena

1. The sacred spring of Tulmul (Khirbhavani)

It is a universely accepted fact that the waters of this sacred spring change colour sporadically. The shades vary from milky white, sea-green, light green, and on rare occasions to light pink. It is said that manifestation of all these colours are considered benign and augers well for the natives of Kashmir. But, if the colour becomes blackish or reddish it is considered to be malignant for the people. However, during the dark days of insurgence in 1990's colours appraoching 'red' or 'black' were materialized. Many inquisitive persons with scientific temper have propounded many reasons to explain this phenomenon; such as the following:

It is an optical illusion?

This hypothesis is untenable because the colour of the spring water is observed to be the same in whatever direction you look at it. However, as opposed to this, an optical illusion is caused by the interplay of incident and emergent light rays at particular angles.

Is it a result of inorganic or organic chemical reactions?

That the cause of the formation of various colours can be due to inorganic or organic chemical reactions which are triggered due to the presence of milk, sugar, ghee, condiments and flowers etc. in different concentrations, offered by the devout. But, this hypothesis also fails because the spring water, if collected in a bucket, is observed to be almost colourless.

However, the phenomenon of changing colours, it is admitted, has to have some scientific explaination. So far no definite conclusions have been made. Since this apparently defies a logical explaination, it becomes a symbolic representation of the attribute of the effulgence of the deity.

2. Goddess Sharika and Hariparbat

(1) The massive rock, iconised as representing goddess *Ashtaa Dashibuzi Sharika* (goddess Sharika with eighteen hands), is not an ordinary stone. It is unique in the sense that this type of stone is not found anywhere on Hariparbat Hill. It's colour (which is light green), texture and density appear to be unusual. Thus, one is tempted to assert that it might be a remnant of a meteorite.

(2) It had been authoritatively suggested, by none other than the respected late Sri G.R.Santosh, the famous painter-poet, that the shapes of most of the boulders and rocks strewn throughout the western and south-western face of the Hariparbat Hill, stretching right from the Ganisha's shrine along the shrines of Saptareshis, Mahakali, Deviangan and Mahalakshmi, are not wholly natural but sculptured by human hands right from the remote times. These sculptured rocks appear to exhibit such images which seem to represent animate and

inanimate objects. These appear to change according to the angle of incidence of sunlight or moonlight during the course of a year. It has been opined by him that all these images do convey some pictorial language which requires to be deciphered.

3. Trisamdhya or Sundabrer

This place has a small spring sacred to goddess Sandhya, which used to be one of the prominent shrines in olden times. The remarkable phenomenon associated with this shrine is that the spring gets filled with water intermittantly (three times during the day and night) only in the month of *Jeth* (May-June) every year. Another unique phenomenon, according to local tradition, is that at the time when the tank is full of water, the spring gets dessicated and soon dries up. There has been no satisfactory scientific explanation for this peculiar phenomenon.

4. Pavan Sandhya

This shrine consists of a small round shaped spring about 5 ft. in diameter situated about 15 kms east of Verinag on the north-western wooded spur of the mountain range. There are two unique phenomena associated with this spring such as:-

(1) This spring gets filled with water only once in a year i.e on the day of (*Mag Amavasi*) when moon is in the constellation (Nakshatra) of 'Mag' and lasts till this asterism is over.

(2) On this day the water level of the spring rhythmically fluctuates like inhalation and exhalation of air. Hence the name *Pavan Sandhya.*

Phenomena such as mentioned above is obviously very unique indeed in that it apparently defies any definite scientific explanation.

5. Holy Amarnath

Amarnath cave, as already mentioned earlier, is a natural rock fissure in which an ice-lingam is formed. The uniqueness of this natural phenomenon lies in the fact that the height of the ice-lingam varies according to waxing and waning of the moon.

Another remarkable observation is that on the *Shravan Poornima* [(15^{th} bright-half of *Shravan* (July - August)], on the yearly pilgrimage day, a pair of doves invariably appear in the cave and then disappear after the yatra. The pecularity lies in the fact that not a single bird is seen anywhere right from Vavjan (12,000 ft. ASL) up to the Holy Cave.

6. Gangubheda or Budhbrer

The geographical position of this ancient spring and other relevant details have already been given herein before. The uniqueness of the phenomenon associated with this shrine is that there is no accumulation of snow within 100 ft. from the spring although in the surrounding areas snow accumulation is tremondous.

7. Unique chinar tree at Yachhigam

Yachhigam is a small hamlet not far from Badgam in south-west of Srinagar. There is a large and very old chinar tree standing on the fringe of a road inside Yachhigam village. The peculiar phenonmenon about this tree is that even during peak winter season, when all the plants and trees are bereft of leaves and green foliage and when everything is decked under snow, there is one small branch (in the shape of an omkar) of this tree which continues to have lush-green leaves even though the rest of the tree is bare like an other chinar tree in winter.

Appendix - 5

Destruction of Monuments

The age-old shrines, places of worship, great monuments and institutions of knowledge including classical literature, art, philosophy etc. of *Kashmiri* Brahmins were completely destroyed and obliterated during the period between the 14^{th} & 19^{th} century by invading zealots. The extent of widespread damage inflicted can be judged from the following summary of major shrines and monuments which existed before the arrival of the first wave of these foreign invaders in the beginning of the fourteenth century.

S. No.	Ancient Name	Present Name	Location
1	**Vejiveshvara** (Temple Rebuilt by King Kalasha)	Vejibror	45 kms south of Srinagar on the Jammu National Jammu National Highway.
2	**Shanara** (Temple & Spring Built by King Sacinara)	Khrew-shar (Now a ziarat)	25 kms south-east of Srinagar.
3	**Shamangasa** (Temple Built by King Sacinara)	Shangas (Now a ziarat)	10 kms from Achhabal in Kuthair pargana
4	**Vardhamane-sha** (Shiva Temple Built by King Samdhimat)	Malyar	2^{nd} Bridge Srinagar near a mosque
5	**Bhemadevi** (Temple & Spring)	Brain (Now a ziarat)	At Dampur 2 kms North of Brain near Nishat

6	Nandavana (Temples Built by King Megha-vahana)	Narvor (Now a ziarat)	Near Hariparbat, Srinagar
7	**Pravaresha** (Temple Built by King Praversena-II)	Ziarat of Bahudin Sahib	Bachhibaran, near the southern foot of Hariparbat.
8	**Ranasvamin** (Temple Built by King Ranaditya)	Ziarat of Pir Haji Mohd.	Lach'm Kul, Naushahr west of Hariparbat.
9	**Martand Temple** (Temples Built by King Lalitaditya)	Ruins Maintained by Archeological Survey of India). This great plateau archetectural marvel was destroyed by Sultan Sikandar (The Iconoclast).	Situated near the northern edge of Mattan near Anantnag.
10	**Bhimakeshava** (Built by Bhima Shahi)	Bumzu (Now entombs Baba Bamdin Sahib)	Situated 1.6 kms east of Mattan.

The list of above mentioned places of worship is only indicative and not exaustive. Apart from these religious places there were many centers where various branches of knowledge including fine arts like music, natyashstra, dramatic performances, philosophical studies and literature were studied, taught or performed. One of the most important universities was located at Chakdar near (Vejibror) on the left bank of River Vetasta. These centers were either looted or burnt down on the orders of the foreign invaders. Consequently most of valueable ancient and current written treatises and documents were lost irretrievably.

Glossary

Adi Shankracharaya	Reviver of vedic culture 788 A.D - 820 A.D. Expounded theory of Advaita (monism).
Advaita	A sub-school of Vedanta; a philosophy of non-duality; a monistic system of thought in which "Self" (Atman) is identified with the "Whole" (Brahman).
Agni	Fire or Fire-God referred to in the Vedas.
Ahura Mazda	The Avestan name for a divinity of the old Iranian religion who was proclaimed the uncreated God by Zoroaster, the founder of Zoroastrianism.
Alluvium	Material deposited by rivers.
Ananta	One of the names of Lord Vishnu.
Apabhrmsha	A term used by Sanskrit grammarians since Patañjali to refer to dialects that deviate from the norm of Sanskrit grammar. In Sanskrit it literally means "corrupt" or "non-grammatical language".

Aranyakas	A part of the Vedas which discuss sacrifices which are primarily concerned with the proper performance of ritual (orthopraxy).
Armenoid	A subtype of the Caucasian race said to be found throughout Eurasia.
Ardhanareshvra	A composite androgynous form or icon of Shiva and his consort Parvati (also known as Devi, Shakti and Uma in this icon) depicted as half male and half female, split down the middle.
ASL	Above Sea Level.
Asura	A group of power-seeking tribes, sometimes considered sinful and materialistic, who have been stated to have been opposed to the Devas.
Atharveda	A collection of spells and incantations, apotropaic charms and speculative hymns.
Avesta	A collection of sacred texts of Zoroastrianism, composed in the Avestan language.
Bactria	The ancient name of a historical region in Central Asia, located between the range of the Hindu Kush and the Amu Darya (Oxus). It was a part of the north-eastern periphery of the Iranian world, now part of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. The region was once host to Zoroastrianism and Buddhism.
Badakshan	A historic region comprising parts of what is now north-eastern Afghanistan and south-eastern Tajikistan. The name is retained in Badakhshan Provinces, which is one of the thirty-four provinces of Afghanistan in its far north-east part containing the Wakhan Corridor. Much of historic Badakhshan lies within Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province located in the in south-eastern part of the country.

Bhanumasis	Followers of the Solar Calendar among the Kashmiri Pandits.
Bhavanimata or Bhavani	A ferocious aspect of the goddess Parvati. Bhavani means "giver of life", the power of nature or the source of creative energy. In addition to her ferocious aspect, she is also known as Karunaswaroopini, "filled with mercy".
Bhoga	Attachment to sense enjoyment and material opulence.
Brahmanas	Commentaries on the four Vedas, detailing the proper performance of rituals.
Brahma	God of creation and one of the Trimurti (others being Vishnu and Shiva) who, according to the Brahma Purana, is the father of Manu from whom all human beings are descended. His consort is Gayatri and Saraswati is his daughter who sits beside him to gain knowledge and is referred as the goddess of learning. Brahma is often identified with Prajapati, a Vedic deity.
Brahman	Supreme cosmic spirit referred to in the Vedanta philosophy; also a metaphor for all of creation: its laws and its inherent intelligence and the principle which creates all of the manifest realms.
Chakras	A concept referring to wheel-like seven vortices which are believed to exist in the surface of the etheric double of man.They also mean "force centers" or whorls of energy permeating, from a point on the physical body, the layers of the subtle bodies in an ever-increasing fan-shaped formation. Rotating like vortices of subtle matter, they are considered the focal points for the reception and transmission of energies.

Chandi	The goddes, while being described as the supreme reality, is a combination of Maha-Kali, Maha-Lakshmi and Maha-Saraswati.
Chandravanshis	A dynasty which claims descent from the moon (Soma or Chandra) which include the Kshatriya or warrior caste.
Dakshaina Murti	An aspect of Shiva as a teacher of all type of knowledge, including yoga, music, and wisdom and personified as the supreme or the ultimate awareness, understanding and knowledge who gives exposition on the shastras and who is worshipped as the God of wisdom and complete and rewarding meditation.
Daityas	A clan or race or Asura as are the Danavas. Daitys were the children of Diti and sage Kashyapa. They were a race of giants who fought against the Devas because they were jealous of their Deva half-brothers.
Damru	A small two-headed drum shaped like an hourglass.
Darvabhisara	The area between Jhelum and Chinab rivers.
Dasas	Servant or slave or, in a religious sense, a devotee of a deity.
Dasyus	An aboriginal people in India who were encountered by the Indo-European-speaking peoples who entered northern India about 1500 B.C.
Deva	The Sanskrit word for god or deity.
Dhauldhar	The mountain range within the Central Himalayan axis, after its bifurcation near Kulu, while branching towards due west.

Durga	An embodiment of creative feminine force (Shakti) and is considered the fiercer, demon-fighting form of Shiva's wife, goddess Parvati.
Dwaper Yuga	The third out of four yugas or ages described in Hindu scriptures.
Gandhara	North-west of India, Taxilla, Peshawar and parts of Afghanistan.
Gandharvas	A group of low-ranking male nature deities that appear in both Hindu, Buddhist, and sometimes even in Jain mythology. In all three traditions, the gandharvas are closely related to the wilderness as well as the creative arts, particularly music.
Gauri	She is the young and unmarried form of goddess Parvati.
Gayatri	Goddess of the Vedas considered as the personification of the *Gayatri Mantra*, a hymn of praise to the Sun god, *Savitri.* She is also considered to be a consort of Brahma along with his other consort, Sarasvati.
Geological Period	The time of the physical formation of the earth.
Goar	A Kashmiri term used to refer to one from among the priestly class of the Kashmiri Pandits.
Harmukh	A mountain in the Himalayan ranges, situated towards the north-east of Srinagar city. According to a popular belief, this mountain, situated between the Jhelum and Kishan Ganga valley, is the abode of Lord Shiva.
Harrapa	An ancient city which was the centre of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Ida	The left channel for flow of subtle energy through the spine. It is white, feminine, cold, represents the moon. Originating in Muladhara, it ends up in the left nostril.
Indra	Indra is the chief Vedic deity and the god of war and rain. He separated the heavens and the earth by defeating Vrtra, a snake-dragon representing chaos and obstacles.
Jiva	The immortal essence of a living organism (human, animal, fish or plant etc.) which survives physical death. It has a very similar usage to 'atma', but whereas atma refers to 'the cosmic self', 'jiva' is used to denote an individual 'living entity' or 'living being' specifically.
Jwala	Goddess of cosmic fire.
Kaliyuga	The last of four yugas, or ages, described in the scriptures of Hinduism. Hindus and Sikhs believe that human civilization degenerates spiritually during the Kaliyuga, which is referred to as the "Dark Age" because, in it, people are as far removed as possible from God.
Karewa	The remanants of a lake in the form of lacustrine mud on the margins of the mountains as found in the valley of Kashmir.
Karkun	Service class amongst Kashmiri Pandits
Karma	Concept of "action" or "deed", understood as that which causes the entire cycle of cause and effect.
Karmakanda	That part of the Sruti or Vedic writings which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites.
Keshava	One of the name of Lord Krishna

Kshatriyas	Kings, soldiers or warrior class in the Hindu Society; the remaining three being: Brahmins (Scholars, teachers and priests), Vaishyas (Agriculturists and merchants) and the Shudras (Service providers and artisans).
Kundalini	A spiritual spark or energy source stated to be located at the base of the spine which can move through channels of the human body and which practioners claim to tap and awaken by practicing, physical, mental and spiritual disciplines and yogic techniques.
Lemuria	The legendry continent named so by the archaeologists after the monkey like animal, "lemur".
Lingum	A phallic representation of the Hindu deity Shiva used for worship in temples; a symbol of male creative energy of the phallus.
Mahatmya	Legend of a shrine or any holy place.
Manavs	Humans.
Mahabali	A benevolent Asura king and the grandson of Prahlada.
Mahabharat	One of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India.
Mahadevi	Meaning the "great goddess"; a term used to denote the goddess or Devi who is the sum of all other Devis - an all encompassing female deity as the consort or complement to an all encompassing male deity; the ultimate reality (Brahman).
Mahesh	Another name for Shiva. In the trinity of the gods Brahma, Vishnu & Mahesh, Mahesh is known as god of destruction and cosmic dissolution.
Malmasis	Followers of the Lunar Calendar.

Manu	A title accorded to the *progenitor* of mankind. In Hindu tradition described as the very first king to rule this earth; one who is said to have saved mankind from the universal flood. Being absolutely honest, he was initially known as "Satyavrata" (one with the oath of truth). His wife is Shraddha, the author of ancient Hindu law.
Merv	Formerly Achaemenid Satrapy of Margiana, and later Alexandria and Antiochia in Margiana, it was a major oasis-city in Central Asia, on the historical Silk Road, located near today's Mary in Turkmenistan. Several cities have existed on this site, which is significant for the interchange of culture and politics at a site of major strategic value. It is claimed that Merv was briefly the largest city in the world in the 12^{th} century.
Mohinjodaro	Situated in the province of Sindh, Pakistan, it was one of the largest city-settlements of the Indus Valley Civilization.
Moksha	In Indian religions, it literally means "release", i.e. the liberation from worldly life and the concomitant suffering involved in being subject to the cycle of repeated death and reincarnation.
Mount Kailasha	A peak in the Gangdisê Mountains, which are part of the Himalayas in Tibet. It is considered a sacred place in four religions: Bön, Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. In Hinduism, it is considered to be the abode of Lord Shiva and a place of eternal bliss. The mountain lies near Lake Manasarowar and Lake Rakshastal in Tibet.
Muni	A person with an ambition to attain a siddhi or a divine power or aimed to achieve a divine status.

Nadis	These constitute channels of flow of subtle vital force in Kundalini Yoga.
Nagas	An aboriginal tribes of the valley of Kashmir and elsewhere.
Nakshatras	27 divisions of the sky, identified by the prominent star(s) in them, (used in Hindu Astrology).
Narayana	Another name for Vishnu.
Natraja	A depiction of Shiva as the cosmic dancer who performs his divine dance to destroy a weary universe and make preparations for God (Brahma) to start the process of creation.
Nilmat Purana	Compiled in the 6th or 7th century A.D. It is the most important source of information on ancient Kashmir.
Nirgun-nirakar	The unmanifest and the formless.
Nishadas	Indigenous tribes inhabiting ancient India (according to sources in Hindu mythology). The Nishadha people have also been described in Ramayana and Mahabharata.
Nyaya	The name given to one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy; specifically the school of logic. The Nyaya school of philosophical speculation is based on texts known as the Nyaya Sutras, which were written by Aksapada Gautama in the 2nd century.
Parvati	The benevolent aspect of the goddess Shakti and consort of Lord Shiva.
Pashupati	"Lord of cattle" and also an epithet of Shiva.
Pavan	The god of wind in Hindu mythology and father of Hanuman.

Pingala	The subtle right energy channel flowing through the spine. It is red, masculine and hot and it represents the sun. Originating in the Muladhara, Pingala ends up in the right nostril.
Pir Panjal	The mountain range (about 15,000 ft. ASL) located in the south-east of the Kashmir valley.
Pisachas	A mountain dwelling aboriginal tribe of the Kashmir valley.
Pisachi	A group of languages from which the *Kashmiri* language is considered to be derived from.
Pliocene Age	The period in the geologic timescale that extends from 5.332 million to 2.588 million years before present.
Prakrit	The term (which includes Pali) used for the popular dialects of India which were spoken until the 4th - 8th century A.D.
Prakriti	Means "nature" in Sanskrit which is considered as the basic nature of intelligence by which the universe exists and functions. It is the essential constituent of the universe and is the basis of all activity leading to its creation.
Pranayam	A Sanskrit word meaning "extension of the prana or breath" or more accurately, "extension of the life force".
Puranas	These are important Hindu religious texts, notably consisting of narratives of the history of the universe, genealogies of kings, heroes, sages, and demigods, and descriptions of Hindu cosmology, philosophy, and geography.
Ragnya	Goddess "Ragnya" or "Khir Bhavani"; one of the three Vaishnavite goddesses of Kashmir.

Rajtarangini	First written treatise in Sanskrit on chronicles of Kings of Kashmir by Kalhana spanning 3180 B.C. to 1149 A.D.
Rakshasas	A race of mythological humanoid beings, unrighteous spirits or demons in Hindu mythology.
Rigveda	First of the four Vedas consisting of 1028 hymns to gods like Indra and Agni.
Rishi	A "seer" to whom the Vedas were "originally revealed" through states of higher consciousness. The Rishis were prominent when Vedic Hinduism took shapes as far back as some three thousand years ago.
Rudra	In the Vedas, Rudra is the god of storms, of howling winds and is somewhat feared, being separated from the other gods in certain rituals and kept with malevolent spirits and deities. Rudra gives sinners the tortures of hell: He is death, the demon, the cause of their tears, the god that kills. He is also auspicious, the lord of songs, of sacrifices, the sweet-scented divine healer, the most generous of gods who bestows property and welfare, not just to humankind but also to horses, cows, and sheep, the mainstay of the early Aryan economy. As a warrior, he rides his chariot bearing a thunderbolt and shooting arrows from his formidable bow.
Rudraksha	A large evergreen broad-leaved tree whose seed is traditionally used for prayer beads in Hinduism.

Sam Veda	Second of the four Vedas; the ancient core Hindu scripture. Its earliest parts are believed to date from 1700 B.C. and it ranks next in sanctity and liturgical importance to the Rigveda.
Samhitas	The basic metrical (mantra) text of each of the Vedas.
Samkhya	Samkhya is one of the six schools of classical Indian philosophy.
Sati	Shiva's first wife, who was later reborn as Parvati.
Satisar	The Lake of the goddess Sati.
Satptarishis	The seven great sages of Hindu mythology who have a constellation named after them.
Savitri	The goddess in Hindu mythology who is the daughter of the solar deity Savitr and the wife of the creator God, *Brahma*.
Seismic	Relating to earth-quakes.
Shashtra	A Sanskrit term used to denote rules in a general sense and also used as a suffix in the context of technical or specialized knowledge in a defined area of practice.
Shad Darshanas	The six schools of Hindu philosophy: *Vedanta, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Nyaya (law)* and *Vaisheshka* (physical nature).
Shakta	Practice of worship of Shakti (Mother goddess).
Shakti	Mother goddess.
Sharda	Goddess of learning.
Sharika	Goddess Sharika is a manifestation of Shakti. According to legend, her abode is the Hari Parvat in Srinagar, Kashmir.

Shastra	A Sanskrit term used to denote rules in a general sense. In essence, it is the knowledge which is based on principles that are held to be timeless. It is also used to denote a scripture.
Shina	A Dardic language spoken by a plurality of people in Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan and Dras in Ladakh of India.
Shiva	One of the gods in the mythological divine trinity in the pantheon of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh (Shiva).
Shivagamas	The traditional scriptures of Shaivism.
Shiv-Shakti	In the Tantric cosmology, the whole universe is perceived as being created, penetrated and sustained by two fundamental forces, which are permanently in a perfect and indestructible union. These forces or universal aspects are called *Shiva* and *Shakti*. Shiva represents the constitutive elements of the universe, while Shakti is the dynamic potency, which makes these elements come to life and act.
Shloka	Means 'song' in Sanskrit. It is a category of verse line developed from the Vedic Anustup. It is the basis for Indian epic verse. The Mahabharata and Ramayana are written almost exclusively in Shlokas.

Shruti	A term that describes the sacred texts comprising the central canon of Hinduism and is one of the three main sources of dharma and therefore is also influential within Hindu Law. These sacred works span the entire history of Hinduism, beginning with some of the earliest known Hindu texts and ending in the early modern period with the later Upanishads.
Siddha Marg	A spiritial practice for attaining immediate success in the desired goal.
Siddhas	Siddha in Sanskrit means "one who is accomplished" and refers to perfected masters who, according to Hindu belief, have transcended the ahamkara (ego or I-maker), have subdued their minds to be subservient to their Awareness and have transformed their bodies (composed mainly of dense rajo-tama guna) into a different kind of body dominated by sattva guna. This is usually accomplished only by persistent meditation.
Skanda Purana	The largest Mahapurana; a genre of eighteen Hindu religious texts. The text is devoted mainly to the life and deed of Kartikeya (also called Skanda or Murugan), a son of Shiva and Parvati. It also contains a number of legends about Shiva and the holy places associated with him.
Smrutis	Secondary scriptures or law-codes of the Hindus, based on the teachings of the Vedas dealing with the Sanatana-Varnasrama-Dharma which supplement and explain the ritualistic injunctions called Vidhis in the Vedas.

Spanda	Spanda ("vibration"); a key concept of Kashmir's Shaivism according to which the ultimate reality itself "quivers," that is, it is inherently creative rather than static.
Surya	Sun.
Suryavanshis	The Sun Dynasty or Solar Dynasty is one of the most prominent dynasties in the history of Hinduism.
Syramu Darya Doab	The area around Samarkand characterized by the existence of three "Mesopotamias" (locally known as doab "two waters" in Persian).
Tectonic	Arising due to the differential movements within the earth's crust.
Tethys Sea	Former tropical body of salt water that separated the supercontinent of Laurasia in the north from Gondwana in the south during much of the Mesozoic era (251 to 65.5 million years ago).
Upanishads	These are philosophical texts which are considered to be an early source of Hindu religion. The prime Vedic doctrines of self-realization, Yoga, meditation, Karma and reincarnation are advocated by these sacred texts. They explicate all aspects of spirituality in detail, with examples, illustrations and stories.
Vaisheshika	One of the six Hindu schools of philosophy (orthodox Vedic systems) of India. Historically, it has been closely associated with the Hindu school of logic, Nyaya. It espouses a form of atomism and postulates that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of atoms. Originally proposed by the sage Kanada around the 2nd century B.C.

Vaishnava or Vaishnavism	A tradition of Hinduism, distinguished from other schools by its worship of Vishnu or his associated Avatars (incarnations) in different perspectives or historical traditions which addresses God under the names of *Narayana, Rama, Krishna, Vasudeva* or more often *Vishnu.*
Varuna	God of water.
Vasugupta	The author of the famous Shiva Sutras who was believed to have amassed knowledge and recognition through direct realization. He was a native of Kashmir and was a great devotee of Lord Shiva. (860-925 A.D)
Vedanta	Originally a word used in Hindu philosophy as a synonym for that part of the Veda texts known also as the Upanishads. The name is a morphophonological form of Vedanta ("Veda-end") or "the appendix to the Vedic hymns." It is also speculated that "Vedanta" means "the purpose or goal of the Vedas." By the 8th century A.D., the word also came to be used to describe a group of philosophical traditions concerning self-realisation by which one understands the ultimate nature of reality (Brahman).
Vedas	Means 'knowledge'; which claim to teach man the highest truths that can lead him to God. They are stated to have been transmitted by word of mouth and later recorded in text.
Vindhaya	A range of older rounded mountains and hills in the west-central Indian subcontinent, which geographically separates the Indian subcontinent into northern India (the Indo-Gangetic plain) and southern India.

Vishnu	The supreme God in the Vaishnavite tradition of Hinduism. God of preservation in the trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh).
Vitasta	Ancient name of river Jhelum in the Kashmir valley.
Yogis	Those who practice Yoga or follow its philosophy with a high level of commitment.
Yagna or Yajna	Religious ritual held for pleasing gods.
Yakshas	A class of generally benevolent nature spirits who are the custodians of treasures that are hidden in the earth and in the roots of trees.
Yama	God of death.
Yang	One aspect of the yin-yang concept of taoism. Yang is characterized by fast, hard, solid, focused, hot, dry, and aggressive; and is associated with fire, sky, the sun, masculinity and daytime.
Yejurveda	The third of the four canonical texts of the Vedas. Some estimated it to have been composed between 1,400 and 1000 B.C. The Yajurveda Samhita or 'compilation' contains the liturgy (mantras) needed to perform the sacrifices of the religion of the Vedic period and the added Brahmana and Shrautasutra imparts and provides information and interpretation in relation to the performance of sacrifices.
Yin	One aspect of the yin-yang concept of Taoism. Yin is characterized as slow, soft, yielding, diffuse, cold, wet, and passive; and is associated with water, earth, the moon, femininity and night.

Yoga	Refers to traditional physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines that originated in India. Major branches of Yoga include Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Hatha Yoga. Yoga based on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, comprises one of the six main Hindu schools of philosophy (darshanas) together with Kapila's *Samkhya*, Gautama's *Nyaya*, Kanada's *Vaisheshika*, Jaimini's *Purva Mimamsa* and Badarayana's *Uttara Mimamsa* or *Vedanta*. Many other Hindu texts discuss aspects of Yoga, including the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, the Shiva Samhita and various Tantras.
Yoni	Sanskrit word for female genitalia. Literally considered to be an abstract representation of Shakti and Devi, the creative force that moves through the entire universe.
Zanskar	Located in the north-west of the Ladakh province of Kashmir.
Zend or Zand	Literally means "interpretation".
Zinsudra	The last king of Sumer prior to the deluge. He is subsequently recorded as the hero of the Sumerian flood epic.

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Focusing on a time frame between 7000 B.C. till the advent of Islam in the Valley of Kashmir, this body of work brings forth from the haze of antiquity an era in which Kashmir sparkled like a jewel in every sense of the term. Starting with tracing the ethnicity of its peoples, the iconic worship of Nagas and the nature worship of Rigvedic Aryans, interspersed with Mahayana Buddhism, Kashmir Shaivism and Islamic Sufism, one can see the evolution of a composite and an assimilative culture; a legacy, which, while having faded away into oblivion over the last few hundred years, is being remembered through this treatise.

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